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ISSUE NO. 37

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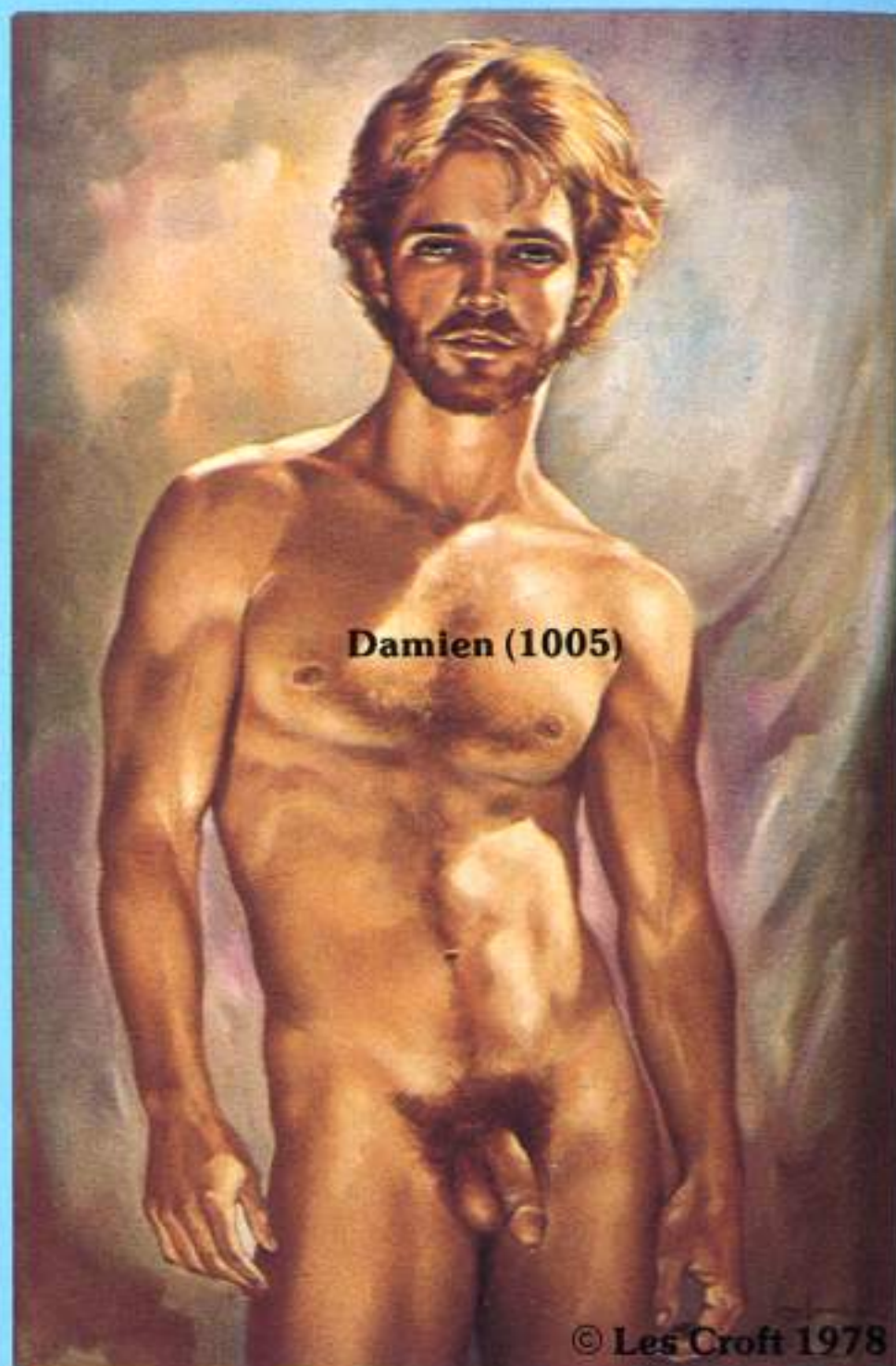
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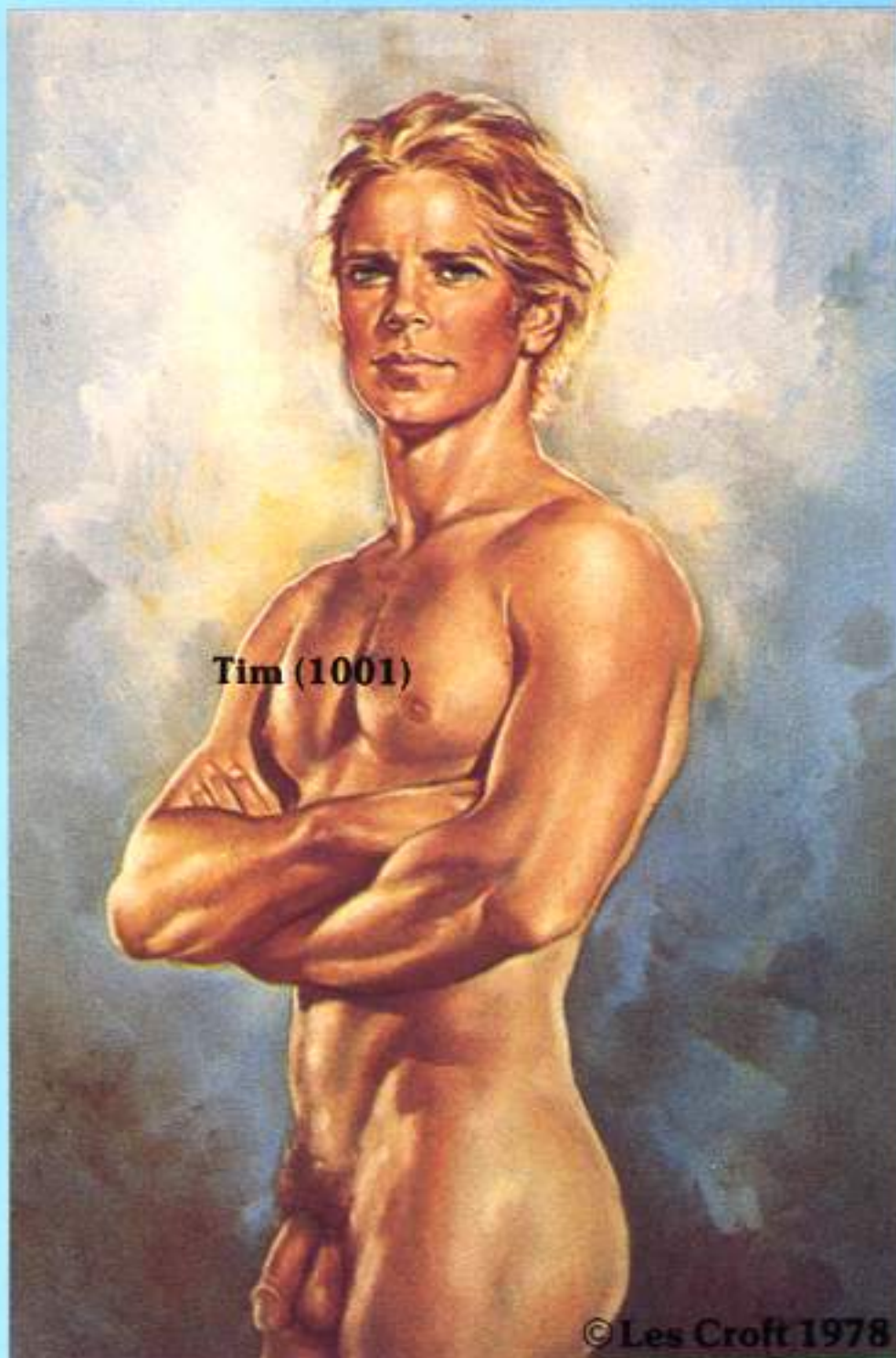


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Issue No. 37

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For Men

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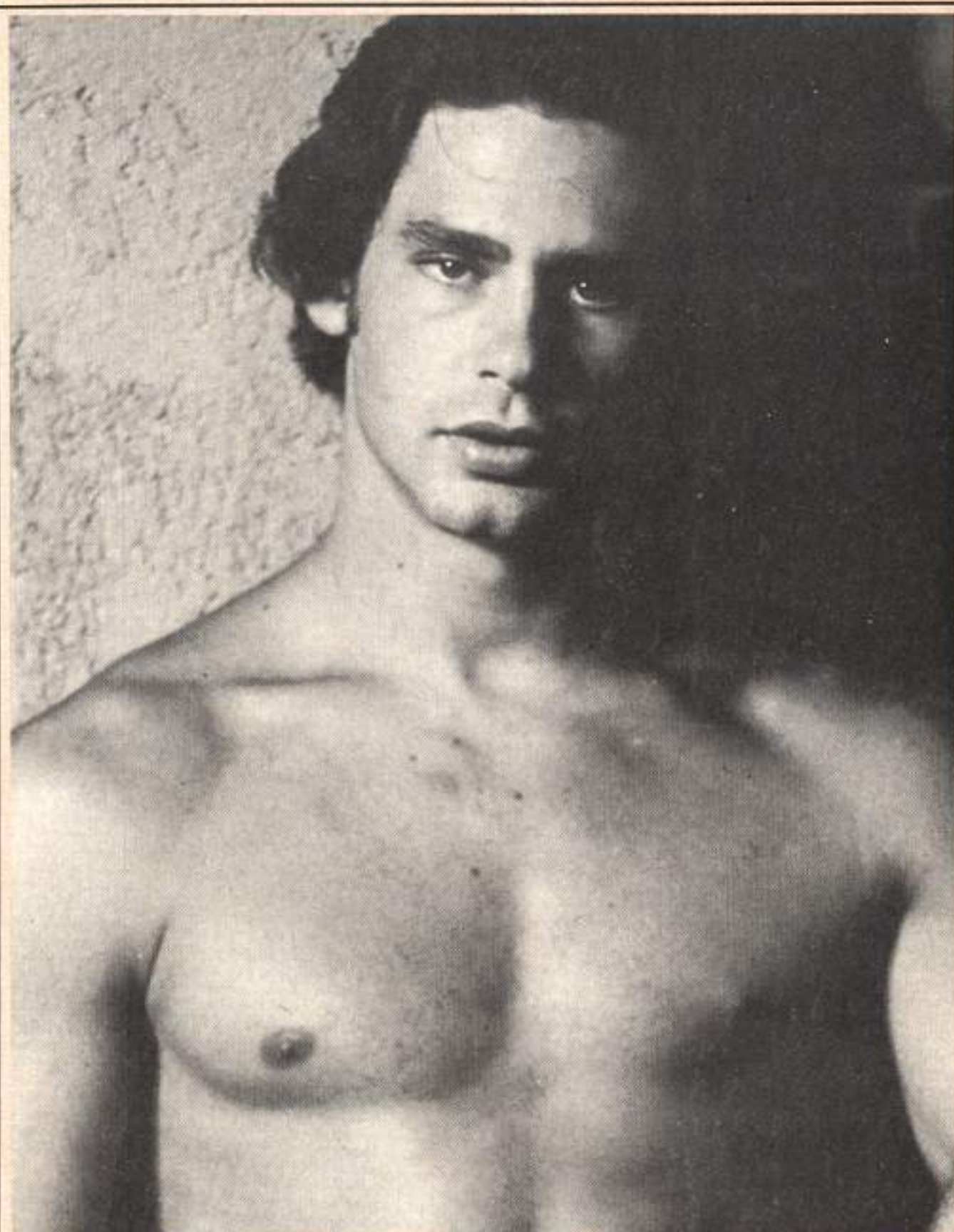


Photo by Kurt Norcross

Welcome to our special disco issue. We're celebrating our fifth anniversary in these pages (in case you didn't already know it, we're the oldest professional-format male gay magazine in the business), and since we couldn't hire a hall big enough for all our readers to join us in a party, we thought we'd like to share an at-home one, just with you.

The disco, as most gays are well aware, is essentially a gay phenomenon—one which has been readily accepted by our straight brothers and sisters. But nobody discos like gays disco, and there are no discos like gay discos. In the flashing strobes, the fog machines, the laser beams, and the heartbeat-pound of the music are the stuff of which fantasies are made and realities (at least for a little while) lost.

It's instant high.

IN TOUCH For Men is on a rising high, thanks to you and your continuing support, and the sky's the limit for all of us—you included. Stick with us, kid—you ain't seen nothin' yet.

Of course, disco is just a part of the gay culture, and it's just a part of this issue. You'll also find our regular features—travel, fiction, art, personalities, and introductions to three hunky nude male models. We're hitting all the bases, from Leonardo da Vinci to Robert Wagner, from short story to some far-out postcard photos.

So get yourself something tall and cool, turn on the stereo (not too loud, now), sit 'ye doon, and join us in our birthday celebration. Here's to many, many more. And here's to you!

editorial

BOOKS & MUSIC & MOVIES

IN TOUCH WITH...

MOVIES

"Bees, bees, millions of bees!" That's the hysterical lament of two helicopter pilots who are among the African killer bees' first victims in Irwin Allen's *The Swarm* (Warner).

Soon, they are crawling all over half the stars in Hollywood, including Lee Grant, without whose assistance you really couldn't have a disaster movie (particularly if you plan to forgo the services of Charlton Heston).

In *The Swarm*, Ms. Grant plays a television commentator who is on the scene in the quaint but slightly hicky town of Maryville because of reports that an entire family had been killed by bees.

"Don't worry," she tells one of her television crew members who doubts there is a story in the sleepy little burg, "there is more to this than just another story about a family killed by bees." Just? Goodness, reporters get jaded quickly.

Michael Caine, on the other hand, doesn't underestimate the menace. Not that anyone believes him. Katherine Ross, however, does think he's kinda cute; much to the dismay of Brad Dillman who has eyes for Ms. Ross himself, but he's such a paranoid nut she doesn't want anything to do with him. I don't blame her.

Olivia DeHavilland, using a Southern accent that has deteriorated markedly since *Gone with the Wind*, has to fight off suitors when she isn't fighting off bees. Her swains include Ben Johnson and Fred MacMurray. Olivia doesn't have to decide between the two men, finally, because they are all killed. (This is not an altogether happy movie.)

Other major stars who get stung include Richard Widmark, Richard Chamberlain, Jose Ferrer, Patty Duke Astin, Slim Pickens and Henry Fonda, who gets to kill himself on screen for the good of mankind. Self-sacrifice seems to run in that family.

A few shots in *The Swarm* are from the bees' multi-faceted point of view. You also get to see Houston go up in flames.

Many critics seem upset with Allen, acting as though they have just discovered he's a vulgarian. If you are a disaster film fan, however, this certainly is one. *The Swarm* is rated PG.

If you were too busy this summer to catch *Convoy* (United Artists), you didn't miss a thing, good buddy.

Not even the opportunity to ogle Kris Kristofferson is worth sitting through Sam Peckinpah's latest exercise in film-making legerdemain.

Convoy is based on the country-western song by C.W. McCall about a truckers' rebellion. Kristofferson plays Rubber Duck (duck, it sounds like... luck) and Ali McGraw plays a radical-chic photographer he picks up along the road. Ms. McGraw doesn't seem to mind that Duck is a sexist pig.

Ms. McGraw has had her trimmed for *Convoy* and looks like a cute little boy. Hum?

Peckinpah films much of this obnoxious tale with poetic loveliness, often rising to such lyric heights that you might want to ignore this film's philosophy which, as one trucker puts it (and not at all satirically), all that matters is "fast trucks, fast women and fast food."

Convoy is rated PG because it's filled with macho dudes. And you know how those guys talk (oh, dear, I've talked you into seeing it).

A film that is worth your while is *Heaven Can Wait* (Paramount), in which Warren Beatty plays a football player who comes back from the dead. A remake of *Here Comes Mr. Jordan*, this version is more coherent and slightly less stuffy.

Beatty has become a new Cary Grant. He has a wonderful way with a self-deprecating line. His self-love is so vast that he can risk looking ridiculous.

One wonderful surprise in *Heaven Can Wait* is Dyan Cannon's vulgar and vital comedy performance as the rich wife of a body Beatty is forced to inhabit because his football player's body has been cremated.

Jack Warden is wonderful, too, as a loyal trainer. Julie Christie is also on hand, looking sultry.

Heaven Can Wait was written, produced, and directed (with Buck Henry) by Beatty, who is not only beautiful but as talented as all-get-out.

The surprise hit of the summer was *The Buddy Holly Story* (Columbia). "His story will have you singing, laughing, crying and stamping your feet," the ads proclaim, and for once a copywriter has come up with a reliable description of

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the facts.

The Buddy Holly Story was intended by producers Fred Bauer, Fred T. Kuehnert and Edward H. Cohen as the definitive picture about rock 'n' roll. They have succeeded beyond anyone's wildest expectations (probably even their own).

Unlike the pretentious *American Hot Wax*, *The Buddy Holly Story* isn't impressed with its own hipness. It doesn't constantly remind you how important it is, nor does it need to constantly point to its historical significance.

The film's ingenious charm is due mostly to the subject. By all accounts, Holly was almost too good to be true (but he was). An indigenous American folk genius, he was the perfect candidate to become the patron saint of rock 'n' roll.

Gary Busey's performance in the title role is a personal triumph, in every way the equal of Jon Voight's paraplegic Viet vet in *Coming Home* and of Jill Clayburgh's abandoned wife in *An Unmarried Woman*.

Busey is Holly. Through Busey's exceptional work, we watch Holly take shape before our eyes as both a man and as an artist.

The film is so loving and sweet-tempered that it is easy to forget that it is basically a tragedy—the story of a young artist cut down at the peak of his powers. Because Holly was no self-destructive artist for whom an early death was a kind of release, the story is especially sad.

His last concert—on Feb. 3, 1959, in Clear Lake, Iowa—becomes a contest between Holly's artistry and the force of implacable destiny. We watch as Holly sings one song after another to his last audience, working with all the skill and aplomb of the mature artist we have watched him become.

Even though we know that Holly will later board a fatal plane, the optimism and sheer driving intensity of the music—the unbelievable *life* of it—holds out the hope that this one time there will be a reprieve from history. The music, we think, will hold back the night.

If I haven't been making myself clear, see *this picture*. It's one of the best in years.

The Buddy Holly Story is rated PG.

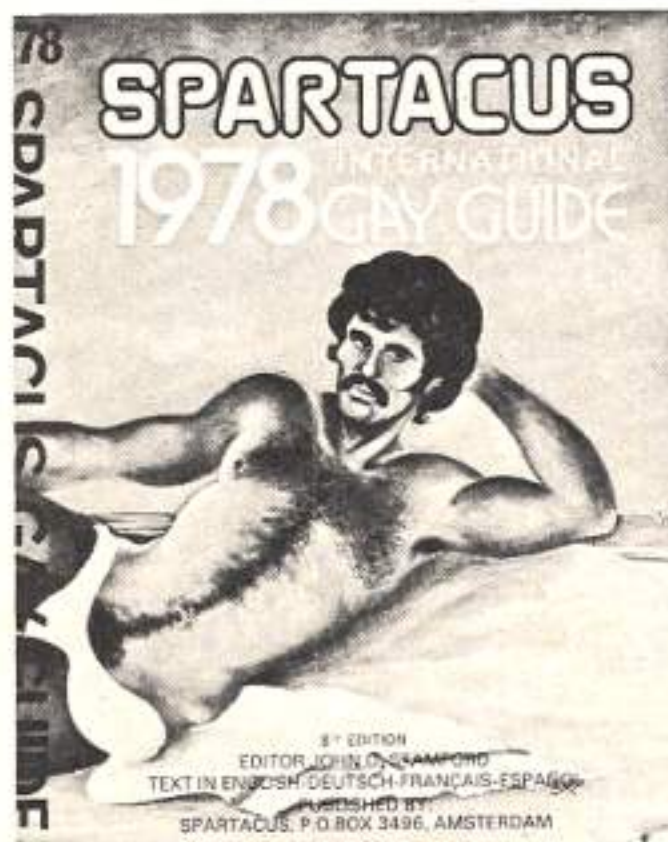
—Barnaby Shackelford

IN TOUCH WITH ... BOOKS

Biographies are more and more touching gay themes. Raymond Chandler wrote only a few novels, late in life, but his stark Los Angeles backgrounds and life-true characters, many of them gay, were sorts the detec-

tive story hadn't seen before. In more than one story, gumshoe Philip Marlowe was drawn to a gay male. That ambivalence was visible in Chandler's life also, but harder to pin down, as two current studies attest. **The Life of Raymond Chandler** by Frank MacShane (Penguin Books, \$3.50, 306 pgs.) has only slight hints (Chris Isherwood, whom Chandler met at Dr. Evelyn Hooker's house, came away feeling Chandler didn't like homosexuals), but **The World of Raymond Chandler**, essays edited by Miriam Gross (A&W Publishers, \$9.95, 190 pgs) deals directly with Chandler's repressed homosexuality, chiefly in Michael Mason's sometimes-Freudian essay.

Evelyn Waugh's Officers, Gentlemen and Rogues, The Fact Behind His Fiction, by Gene Phillips (Nelson-Hall, \$9.95, 180 pgs.) is disappointing, stretching to parallel every Waugh story to events and personalities in Waugh's life, and reducing his devastating satire to dry but bizarre plots. Still, worth reading, after reading the originals.



The eighth thick edition of the **Spartacus International Gay Guide, 1978**, edited by John D. Stamford, PO Box 3496, Amsterdam, is a lavishly illustrated listing of 3344 restaurants and bars, 86 gay beaches, 241 film houses, 321 baths, 1774 cruising areas, 116 VD clinics, 311 male brothels and 494 gay organizations, for men only. Its editor is a fierce advocate of gay buying power. Carefully checked out, though the skimpy U.S. section (Stamford has never visited here) is not reassuring evidence as to the accuracy of the whole. Entries in English, German, French and Spanish. \$15, cashier's check, registered mail recommended.

By far the best American guide is **Gayellow Pages**, which does a lot more than the usual bar scene. Issued twice yearly by Renaissance House, Box 292, Village Station, New York 10014, the National Edition costs \$5, and lists bars, baths, businesses, churches,

organizations, accommodations and publications, all carefully researched and clearly described. Regional editions also available.

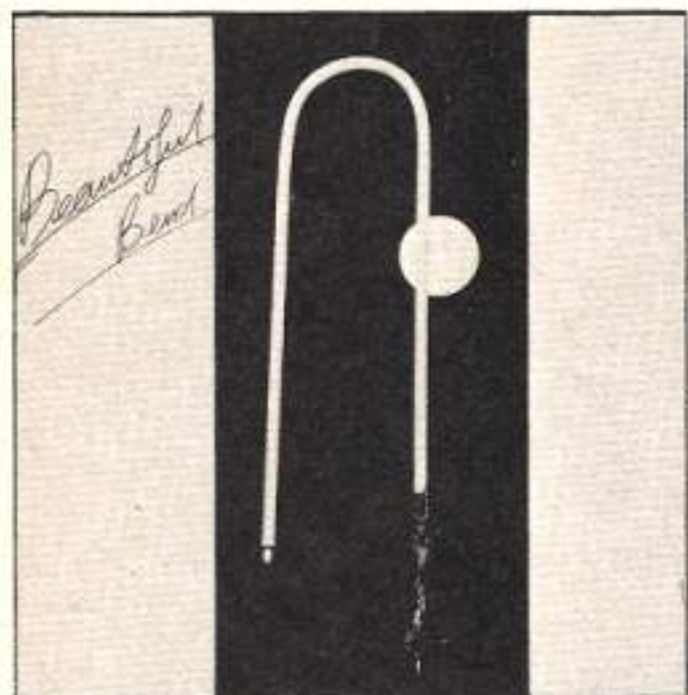
Hansel and Gretel in Beverly Hills, by Sheila Weller (Morrow, \$8.95, 287 pgs.), is a tour-de-force of gay party-talk lobbed between two stiff-upper-lip loners, Lil Resnick, a failed publicist, her gay hairdresser Ron Halvorsen, and assorted acquaintances. Mrs. Weller has an ear for camp dialogue, and for her people, both a warm heart and a sharp eye. Most writers who try to reproduce large chunks of this kind of dialogue end up with sodden dumplings. Not so in this case.

Haakon, by C.F. Griffin (Crowell, \$9.95, 296 pgs.), is an exciting story of a history professor returned from World War II to his lover, a flighty photographer who seems to have a death-wish. A moody youth Haakon had been drawn to in the Army shows up in bad condition and moves in. An engaging exploration of the closet, of gay morality and conflict, with Haakon trying to "go straight" in the middle. A memorable, thought-provoking story....

Gay Sunshine Interviews, edited by Winston Leyland (Gay Sunshine Press, Box 40397, San Francisco, CA 94140, \$15 hardcover, \$7.95 soft—plus 50¢ postage and 6% sales tax for Calif. purchasers—327 pgs.) is a brilliant series of interviews with gay writers, artists and musicians, many of whom have been often interviewed in other publications with their gayness being treated as a mere footnote. Composer Lou Harrison, poets Ginsberg, Norse, Orlovsky and Giorno, playwrights Genet and Williams and novelists Rechy, Vidal and Burroughs all reveal themselves most intimately and delightfully. Even for those who read most of these in the journal *Gay Sunshine*, this is a most exciting book. A second volume will follow next year, including poet Robert Peters, whose books of verse are worth sampling. **Cool Zebra's of Light** (Christopher Books, 1819 Sycamore Canyon Rd., Santa Barbara CA 93108, \$2.75) describes an affair in Germany with a dazzlingly handsome youth who wasn't ready for fidelity. **The Gift to Be Simple** (Liveright, \$2.50, 114 pgs.) celebrates the founder of the Shakers, Ann Lee, known as "the female Jesus." A poem-set of evanescent beauty, with harshly sexual reveries so common to sex-rejecting mystics. **Gauguin's Chair: Selected Poems, 1967-1974** (Crossing Press, Trumansburg, NY, \$4.95, 130 pgs.), assembles his best. More of Peters' verse available in stores stocking large contemporary verse collections.

—Jim Kepner

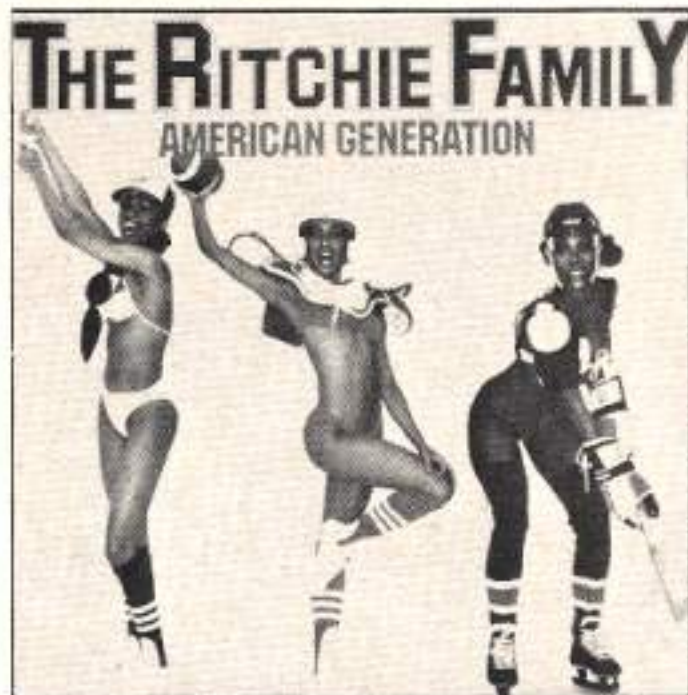
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IN TOUCH WITH ...

MUSIC

One of the jokes which has been circulating through the music industry and generating hearty laughs of recognition is the one to the effect that Helen Reddy got busted—for loitering in front of a band. On a couple of her recent TV outings, the once gracious TV hostess has been trying out a severe new make-up which relies upon her remaining totally immobile and expressionless. It's time this versatile star spent as much time music making as she and her management spend image making.

Reddy's *We'll Sing In The Sunshine* (Capitol) is an overthought vehicle, a package, a commodity, a safe piece of merchandise for any and all tastes and none in particular. Pleasant, inoffensive, toe-tappy, sure, but isn't this the soul of a corporation rather than the highly individual personality who gave birth to the corporation? "Lady of the Night" inspires a repeat play or two, but then it's back on the shelf for this product.

The bigger the talent, the bigger the superstar, the more disappointing routine professionalism can be. Barbra Streisand sings *Songbird* (Columbia) as if she had too much to lose through daring and as if rangey technique alone might placate the masses. The joyous eccentricity, the confident instincts which launched the star are absent here. This is a something-not-very-special-to-please-all-sectors package that even has a patronizing nod to disco fever with "Love Breakdown." Shame, shame.

Never has Streisand's incredible instrument seemed so disengaged from the heart of the material. There are moments to be sure. She does a satisfying version of the hit from the musical *Annie*, "Tomorrow." There is a credible feeling in the simplicity of "You Don't Bring Me Flowers." Our special favorite is the moving "Deep In The Night." This is not an album which would pass the demanding standards of Streisand herself. It is the work of tailors.

Aretha Franklin and her actor husband Glynn Turman co-authored "I'm Your Speed" on her new album *Almighty Fire* (Atlantic). It is the best number on the album and one of the best things Aretha has done on album in the past couple of seasons. The balance of this Curtis Mayfield-produced session is marred by the overproduction and gimmickery that has tarnished the soul of soul music's top contender. That's pretty damned good music, but not the best of Aretha.

The Commodores are one of the most flashy and popular acts, but they continue to be moving in their best work toward a special facility with ballads that are negotiable from the middle of the

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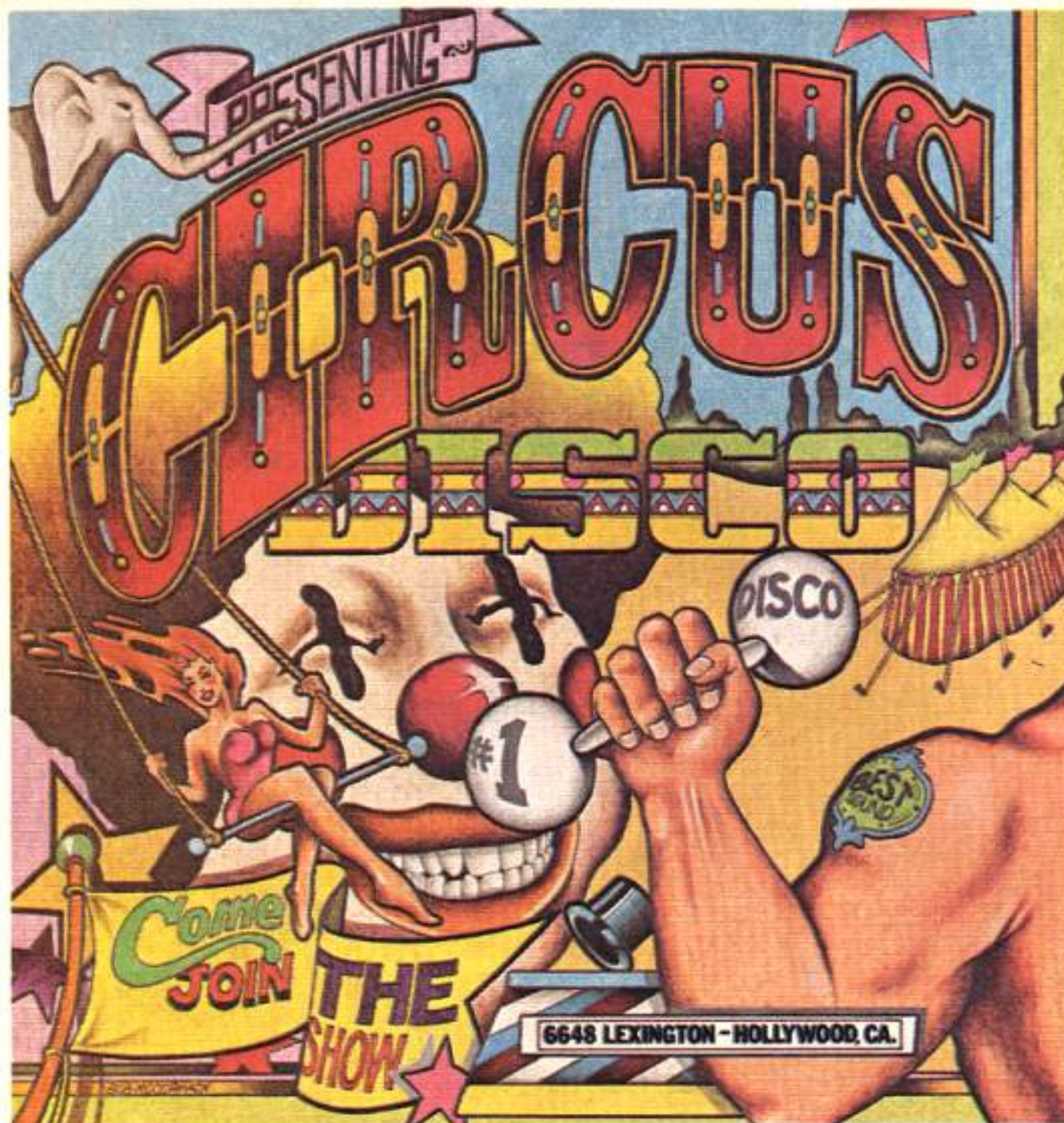
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"Sets the trends, as opposed to following them" Billboard



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road and pop to the heavy soul and R&B channels. Last year it was the elegiac "Easy." This season, on their new **Natural High LP**, it's the haunting "Three Times a Lady," a triumph of sentiment and feeling over the words themselves.

For hardcore Commodores fans there is the driving funk of "Flying High," but it is "Lady" that mesmerizes, thanks to the performance of lead singer and lyricist Lionel Richie. A move to the solo spotlight appears inevitable for this remarkable performer, whose phrasing and feeling beg a broader canvas beyond the limitations of group think and disco stage dazzle.

Mac Davis' **Fantasy** (Columbia) measures his stretch from country western to Las Vegas enroute to a stronger position at the middle of the road, where the TV guest shot money and high club revenue is to be mined. The strength of the album is in its hefty ration of romantic ballads. They really please. They also suggest that Davis, who has borrowed so much from the Glen Campbell story already, is using the Campbell road map as the guide for his own upward mobility.

There is a listless charm to Bonnie Tyler's current hit, "It's A Heartache." It insinuates itself into your consciousness as you drive along the AM airwaves and you find yourself singing along inanely before it has completed. Catchy, that. But as the sun sinks slowly in the western sky and you recount the day's musical blessings, it doesn't recur at all. The problem is that its bouncing-ball melody and repetitive lyric are not borne by a feeling. It is like those hits that "international" stars learn phonetically in a foreign tongue to cash in on the world market. They get the cadences, the beat, even the phrasing sometimes, without an emotional understanding of the sounds that they are producing.

The album of the same title, **It's a Heartache** (RCA), is more of the same, the Welsh songbird going through the country motions without credible country emotions. To paraphrase the street question, it just isn't where Miss Tyler is coming from. Who is Bonnie Tyler and where's that famed Welsh poetry?

Visitors to the Lion's Den of the Golden Lion Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska, have for some years carried home warm memories of performer Lloyd Lindroth, who plays the most caressable instrumental evergreens on an electronic harp. That's right, an electronic harp!

These musical mood pieces have now been recorded on **Love Drops** (Centaur) for the nostalgic traveller and a new legion of fans who are likely to respond to Lindroth's sensitive treatment of "Nadia's Theme," "Send In The Clowns" and even such chestnuts as "Ebb Tide" and "Greensleeves." The only thing that is missing here is the charm of the performer himself.

—Damon West

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IN TOUCH WITH . . . NIGHTLIFE NEW YORK

New York in the fall is a time of re-birth and gay romance. You can trust the seasons to impact greatly on urban life style, whether it's Indian Summer or Autumn Leaves. And as the crowd gets it together, back from hot Fire Island, the city scene picks up momentum along the waterfront and starts to fly with a new year's cycle.

Down in the Village, starting at Christopher Street, the leather and Levi people pick up all the way to the Hudson, replacing last summer's shorts and leopard tops crowd. There's still some sunbathing on the Morton St. pier and action on the northern abandoned piers (now more dilapidated and dangerous than ever). But cocktails center around **Boots and Saddles** off of Sheridan Square and casually move down to **Ramrod** and **Badlands** after sunset. The **Big Wok** is a gay Chinese restaurant in the neighborhood, the first of its kind. And **Clyde's** on Bleecker St. has a long bar and an even longer cruising window which attracts a nightly restaurant following. Check it out!

Further uptown, along the waterfront, you get **Mineshaft**, which is the hot and heavy after-hours club, famed for its forbidden sensualities, its pulsating backrooms and dungeons, its sling/racks and bathtub fanatics. And, until **Westway** is constructed, there's always the abandoned West Side Highway for outside encounters which travel you up to **Eagle's Nest** and **The Spike**. And this is all heavy action, my friends . . .

For culture-minded, the dance-and-disco crowd, the fall brings in the 20th Anniversary Season of Alvin Ailey Dance Theater with its unique jazz/modern choreography and beautiful black bodies. Merce Cunningham also appears at **City Center**—and here we have a more abstract, minimalist vision set to music by John Cage and Takehisa Kosugi.

To collage these dance experiences is only to sample a small spectrum of the scene here in New York. The ballet world, which often overlaps into the modern, has its own energies. This year Erik Bruhn bridged both worlds with his **Othello** for the Jose Limon Company while Martha Graham Company, in reverse, played at the **Met Opera House** and commanded equal attention on an epic scale. John Curry's new concept for ice skating/dance will be tested at the **New York Skating Rink** and is attracting quite a social set. And this fall brings Baryshnikov into the Balanchine/City Ballet repertoire for New Yorkers, after a tour of Saratoga and Copenhagen. That

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is all ballet history in the making, before our eyes.

As for theater, Tennessee Williams' *Creve Coeur* (Broken Heart) opens on Broadway in the fall with Shirley Knight, after its Charleston, South Carolina premiere. *Broadway, Broadway* is Terence McNally's new comedy with Geraldine Page. *A Chorus Line* passes its 1300th performance. And here are gay energies at their most commercial level.

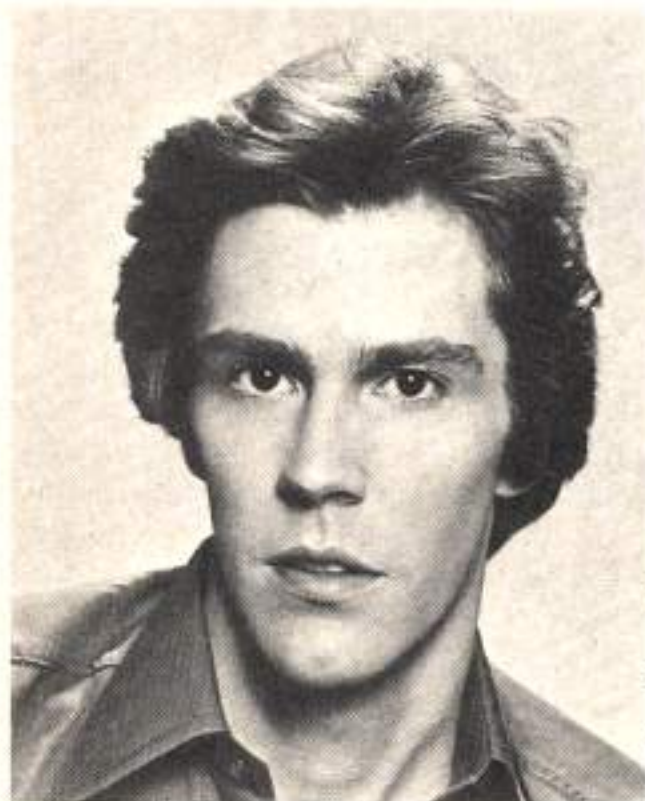


Photo by Marc Raboy

Charles Ward, currently starring in Broadway's *Dancin'*, tries his singing style at *Les Mouches*.

Off Broadway offers many gay shows, from the ridiculous to social drama, which are hard to predict in advance. But if *Hot Rock Hotel* is still running, I recommend it for its gay exploitation, which may sound strange, but it's a quick way of catching the surface—sophisticated, unself-conscious and informative. As for movie houses, *Muscle Bound* is the new hot action movie—but you will probably get that at your own underground cinema.

The *St. Marks Baths* remain the best place on the baths level. And, if in the Wall St. area, try out the *Sauna* at 2 Maiden Lane for the businessman's brunch. Delicious and such a relief!

P.S.: The *Gay Switchboard* is available at any time night or day for gay information: 212-777-1800.

—David Sears

CHICAGO

After closing six weeks for a major renovation, the *Bistro* (420 N. Dearborn) opened in early June, proving once again that it is Chicago's forerunning disco. Owner Eddie Dugan is probably this city's only gay businessman to take an already beautifully designed, successful bar and spend approximately \$250-thousand to offer his customers a new look.

The eclectic overhaul, a combination of contemporary styles, boasts a much larger dance floor, with an unbelievable \$25-thousand light system. Included are 21 police lights, infinity chasers, rain

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lights and a series of micro lights under plexiglass floor strips. Lou DiVito, the Bistro's leading DJ for four years and a graduate of Chicago's Harrington Institute of Interior Design, helped create the light and sound system,—which itself costs \$75-thousand.

There are two large rooms: the disco arena and the main lounge painted in "Perrier green," featuring a huge oval-shaped bar. Both rooms are bordered with plush ultra-suede banquettes. Dancers are featured on a small stage in the disco Thurs.-Sun. evenings.

The only criticism of the Bistro is the new \$3 weekend and holiday cover charge. **Center Stage** (3730 N. Clark) initiated this a few months ago and the Bistro followed suit, apparently thinking, "If they can do it, why can't we?" In the past, most discos have charged \$1, but raised it to \$2 in the last several months. Three dollars, however, is too high, since the patrons don't even get a free drink ticket for a weekday.

Owner Dugan pleads inflation, while manager Veltman gets more to the point: "We want people who have money and enjoy spending money." Yet, if the old saying, "You pay for what you get" is true, then the Bistro offers the best. For out-of-towners wanting to hit the city's best gay disco, the Bistro provides the



Photo courtesy of Wadi Alliba, Gay Life

Wayne Witorick, Roger Messer, Loren Bentley were winners in Chicago's Mr. Windy Contest.

ticket. With the best sound system, light show and dance floor, the Bistro will help you cool your Saturday night fever.

After an exciting beginning, *Center Stage*, Chicago's only self-professed gay club, is faltering. Last spring, manager Gary Chichester began booking into his cabaret some excellent entertainers such as the Harlettes and Chicago comedienne Pudgy, but his recent choices have been uninspired.

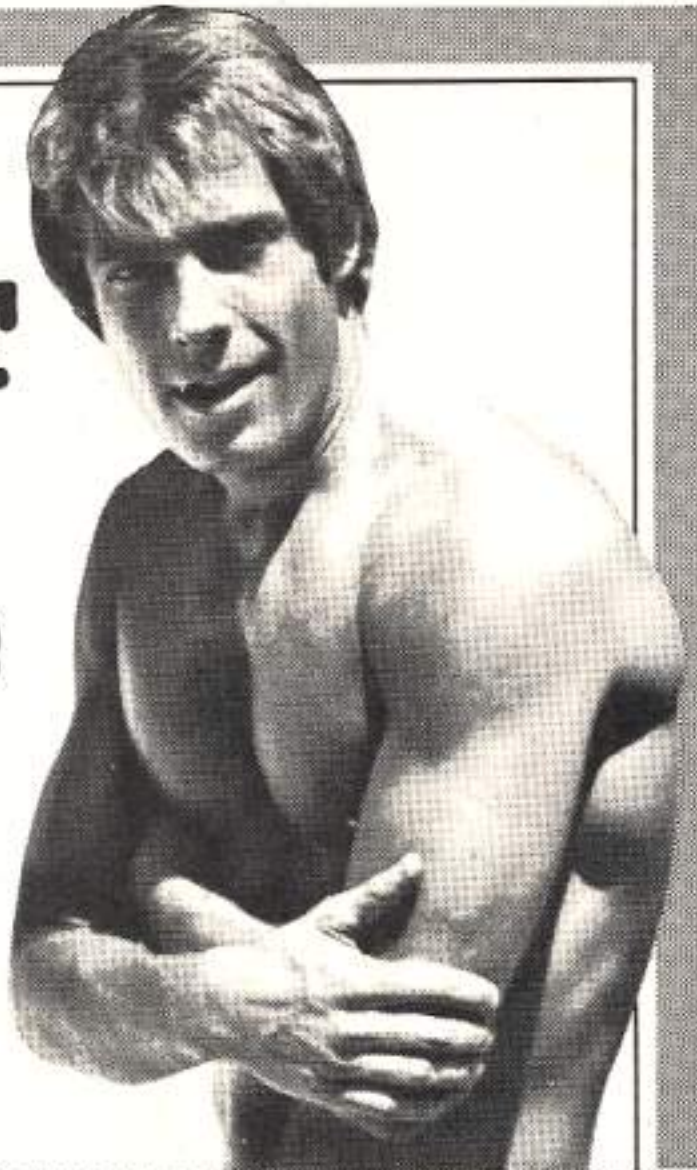
All good cabarets, such as L.A.'s **Studio One**, build a solid reputation from consistently memorable bookings, and Center Stage can't overcome this obstacle. It is doubtful Chichester lacks the ability, since he so astutely handled his job as former manager of Chicago's **Man's Country Baths** (5015 N. Clark), selecting some outrageous performers like comedian Wayland Flowers and fan dancer Sally Rand for that establishment's Music Hall.

Chicago's individual glamour boy contests culminated in June with the annual Mr. Windy Contest. What could have been a cute parody of the proverbial Miss America contest with briefly-clad beefcakes, unfortunately took itself and its participants too seriously. The result was a four-and-a-half hour disorganized fiasco which should be avoided in future years. This is a concept whose idea has come and gone.

Held in the half-full Grand Ballroom of the Chicago Radisson Hotel, the contest was staggeringly hosted by Eddie Dugan (**Dugan's Bistro**) and drag queen Carol Farnham (**Cheeks**, 2730 N. Clark).

Roger Messer was declared the winner; Wayne Witorick, **Mr. Hideaway II** (7301 W. Roosevelt, Forest Park) was named first runner-up, while Loren Bentley, **Mr. Bistro**, became second runner-

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up. Messer, representing Chicago's excellent female impersonator show lounge, the **Baton** (436 N. Clark), received a cash award plus an all-expense paid trip for two to Fort Lauderdale. **Giovanni's** (3724 N. Clark), a Latin disco, presented the winner with a trip for two to Acapulco. Trophies and several gift certificates were given to the runners-up.

—Bill Lumen

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Saturday night fever? Go to the **Lost and Found** (56 L St. S.E.), a super place to dine, dance, drink, and walk out with a cute number. Or keep on easing down the road to **The Pier** (1824 Half St. S.W.) where the fever is on almost every night. The clientele is on the young side, but fun. Across from Washington's very popular leather bar, **The Eagle**, is **The Exile** (8th and New York Ave. N.W.) where, if you shed a couple of pounds while discoing, you can put them right back on by having breakfast.

The Court Jester (2321 Wisconsin Ave. N.W.) is under new management and just as good as ever. The music's well chosen, the dance floor always packed. The same's true at **The Fraternity House** (2122 P St. N.W., rear) which has really improved in almost everything, including the men.

Raul Julia's *Dracula*, at the Eisen-

hower Theater, just might be the season's greatest hit—much credit going to Edward Gorey for the wild scenery and costumes. Deborah Kerr appears in Frederick Lonsdale's new comedy, *The Last*



Raul Julia stars in Washington's Eisenhower Theater production of *Dracula*.

of *Mrs. Cheney*. And for Liza Minelli buffs, the *Merriweather Post Pavilion* is the place to be at the end of Sept. The Kennedy Center Opera House features the hit 1926 Broadway musical, *Ger-*

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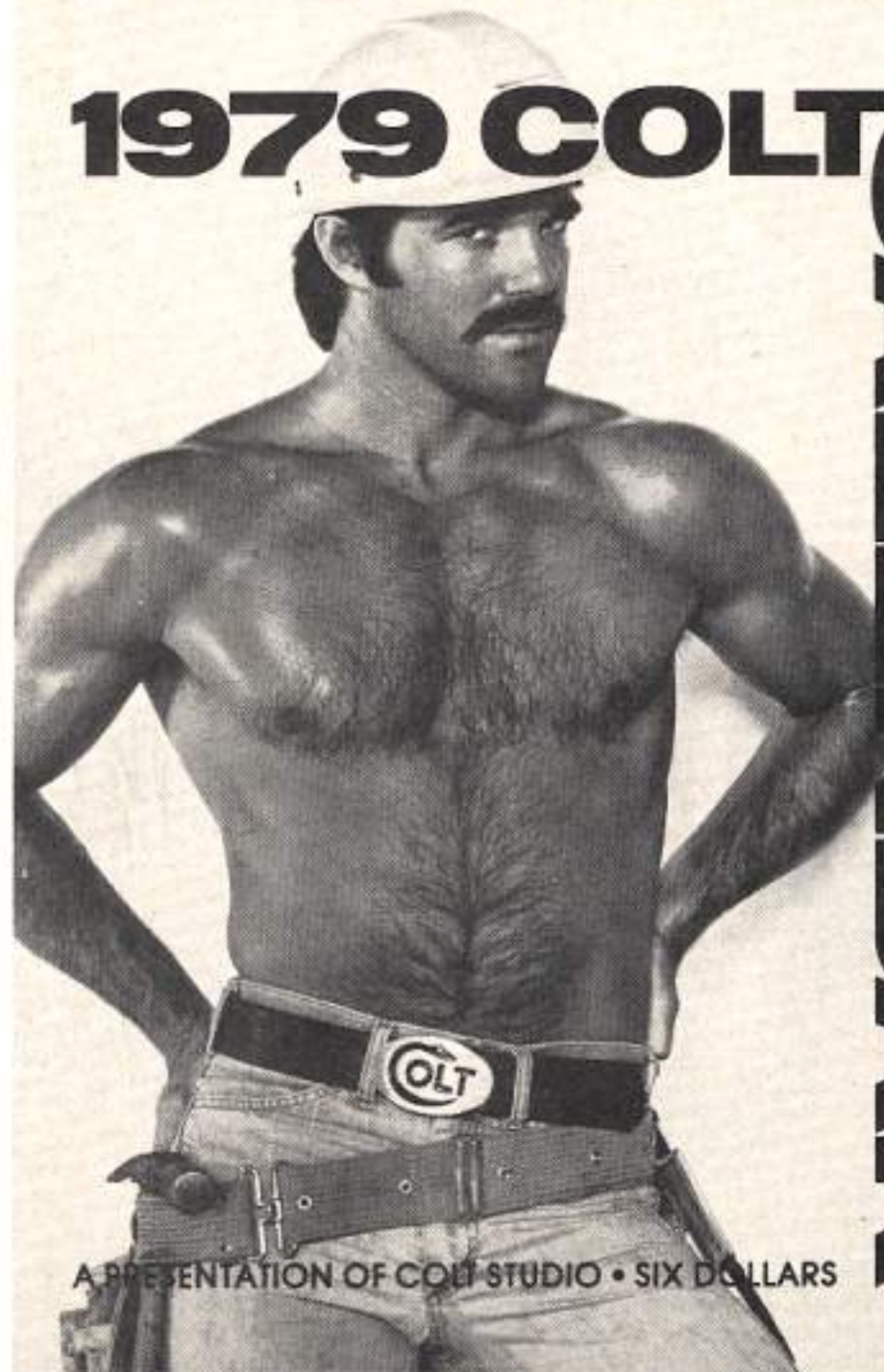
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shwin's *Oh, Kay*. And the **Arena Stage** (6th and Main Ave., S.W.) highlights the American premier of Odon Von Horvath's 1931 play, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*.

And, finally, the **New Playwright's Theater** of Washington (1742 Church St. N.W.) has followed its hugely successful *Nightmare* with another smorgasbord of laughs—Tim Grundman's *Out to Lunch*

—Greg Kodjanian

SAN FRANCISCO

Beach Blanket Babylon Goes to the Stars! Steve Silver's all-new musical revue, sparkles with style, surprises, and specializes in spontaneous good fun at **Club Fugazi** (678 Green St.) in North Beach. The musical story of Snow White, who leaves home to find her prince charming in Hollywood, begins at Schwab's Drugstore and ends with tuneful wish-fulfillment at the Academy Awards. The show includes singing rainbows, dancing waiters, outrageous hats that would embarrass Carmen Miranda, clever dialogue by bon vivant raconteur, Armistead Maupin, and a talented ensemble of attractive performers which makes this one of the hottest shows in town. Regularly scheduled performances are Wed. and Thurs. at 8pm; Fri. and Sat. at 8 and 10:30pm and Sun. at 3 and 7:30pm. Tickets are available at Club Fugazi Box Office (421-4222), Macy's, BASS, and Ticketron.

Before or after the show, have dinner at **Washington Square Bar & Grill**, around the corner at 1707 Powell Street, ph. 982-8123. Continental Italian dinners featuring veal and fish tastefully satisfy from \$5.95 to \$7.95. Everything is a la carte, full bar, North Beach atmosphere including flower sellers, persuasive opera singers, and it's a favorite hangout of Richard Brautigan.

The **American Conservatory Theater** opens its repertory season with Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* Oct. 14; following with Turgenev's *A Month in the Country*, Oct. 17; and O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* opening Oct. 31. Recently praised for their production of Tad Mosel's *All the Way Home* in Japan, ACT was encouraged by one critic there to include a more contemporary (fraught and disillusioned) American play in their next tour. Lanford Wilson's *The 5th of July* is scheduled to open Feb. 6th, 1979. Perhaps it will fit the bill.

The **Eureka Theater** (Market and 16th St.) presented a moving portrait of a family faced with a mother dying of cancer. *Mourning Pictures* written by Honor Moore and directed by Alma Becker is a poetic drama which gets at the heart of the matter. Kenna Hunt portrayed the mother with a variety of mood and insight. This company does consis-

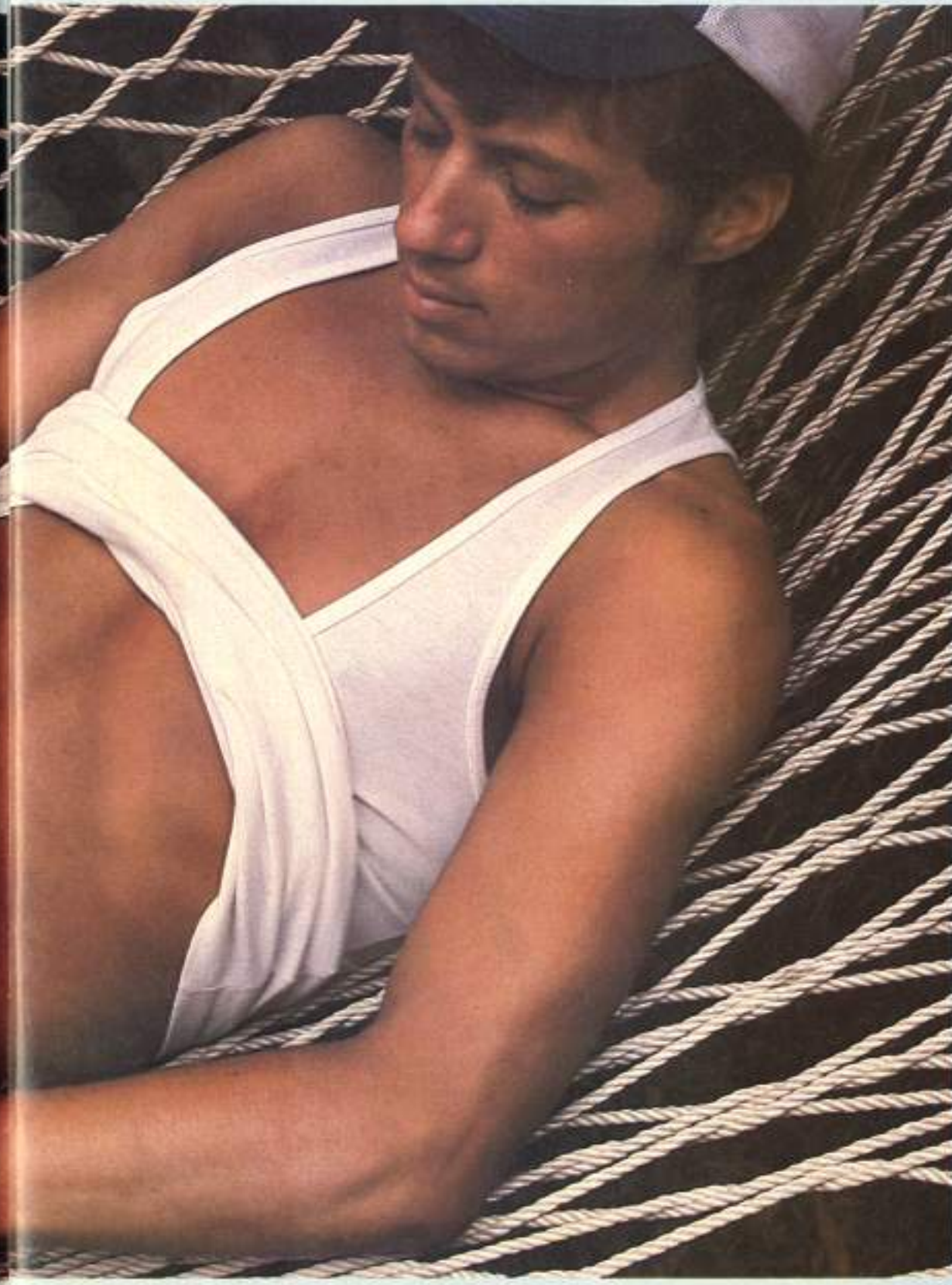
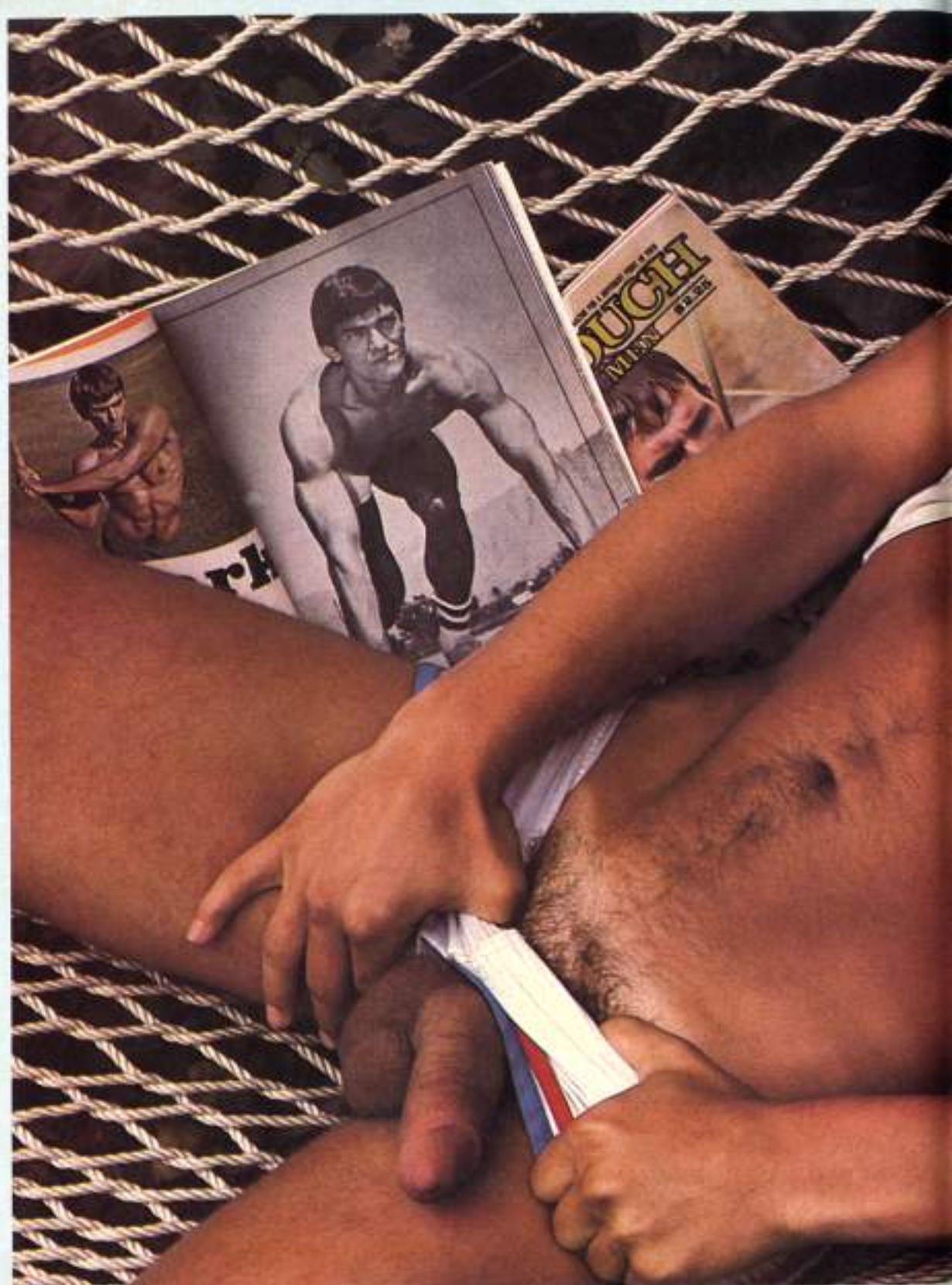
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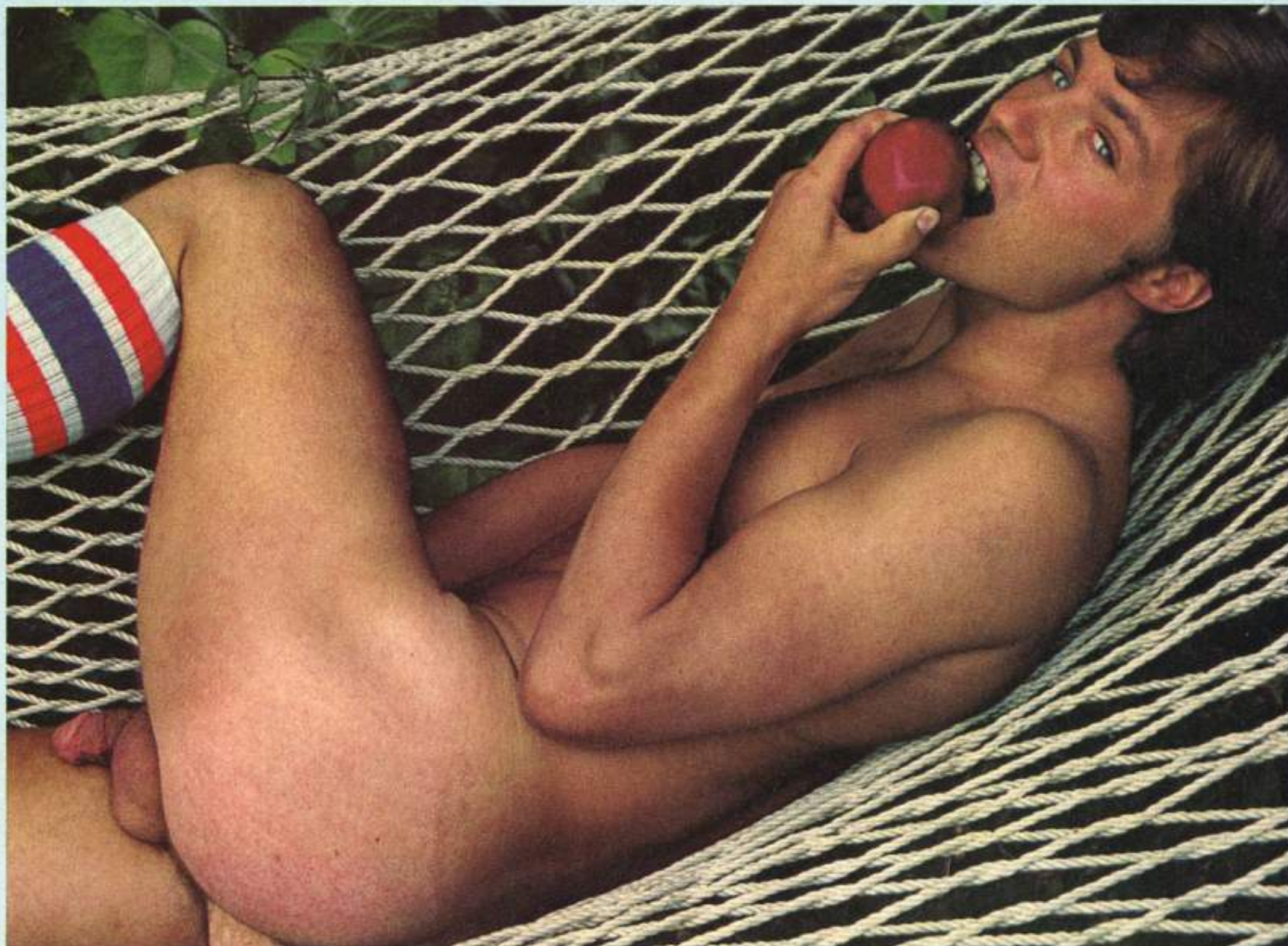
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The Emperor's New Jockey Shorts

Fiction by Brian Garland

Illustration by Forrest G. Hooper

Harry bent down to tie his shoelace, laying his mail on the sidewalk as he did so. He really didn't need to tie the lace, but he enjoyed the view it gave him of his neighbor, Jake, with whom he had stopped to chat. His face was even with Jake's crotch, and he kept his head up, pretending to listen, while he examined it. After tugging the knot half a dozen times, he gathered his mail and straightened up, admiring the curve of Jake's side. He thought that Jake was a very good-looking man except for the appendectomy scar, which was too new and red.

Having exhausted the possibilities of a chance encounter at the mailbox, Harry went inside, shuffling through his mail as he climbed the stairs. There were three bills, which he placed in a pile with the others, squaring them up as he did so, and a letter from a rarely seen relative, which he slipped unopened into a desk drawer, deciding to wait until he was already in a depressed mood before reading it. He lit a cigarette, putting both the pack and matches back in the same shirt pocket, and looked out the window.

In the park across the street there was a soccer game being

played. It amused him to watch all the earnestness and fury of the players as they drove the ball toward him, to be replaced, when the ball would suddenly change its course, by a sea of bouncing butts loping away. Although, he thought as he drew on his cigarette, some of them were very nice butts indeed. The Saturday morning soccer game, watched through his apartment window with the first cigarette and the first cup of coffee, was a ritual for him. This morning, though, he wouldn't watch it to conclusion. This morning he had to pick up his new suit.

It was a good suit, an expensive luxury. It made him feel good, supporting him and outlining his good points, while managing to cover his bad ones. He ground out his cigarette and put on a light sweater, for although it was sunny it was still a bit chilly.

As he waited for the bus he watched a boy and girl cross the street, the boy's arm carelessly tight across her shoulders. He smiled as the muscles moved through the boy's calf, tightening and then bouncing a little as each step was taken. He thought he caught a hint of semi-erection, a slight hardening, a lifting, and he smiled even more, feeling a response in himself.

Once in the clothing store he decided to wear his new suit home. It wasn't so much childish delight as a desire to stand in front of the three-way mirror, as he had done when he first wore the suit, and make some little comment about the cuff, which would cause the salesman to bend down and make a trifling adjustment, and Harry could look down at him, watching his great balls dangle just above the floor, with only their dark hairs brushing the carpet. If Harry then made a remark about the other cuff, the salesman would reach across him and adjust it, causing his balls to bounce off his ankle, twisting and rolling slightly.

It was, Harry thought, a wonderful world.

...

It had been his world for three months now—first a frightening world, then a terribly exciting one. He had been riding the bus when it began to happen.

The clothing on the men around him began to disappear. Article by article, their shoes, jackets, ties, shirts, underwear, vanished. Within a few minutes there was nothing left. He was still clothed, but all the men around him were naked.

It had been confusing at first because he thought that perhaps he would appear naked to them also, but he was the only one. He had confirmed this on several occasions.

"What do you think of this shirt?" he would ask someone, "Do you think it's too bright?"

"No," the other would say, "no, I like it."

Once he had gone to a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist had a round smiling face, wire-rimmed glasses, and a bushy white beard. Harry had tried to tell him what had happened, but he was so distracted by the tattoo of a sailing ship across the psychiatrist's chest that he couldn't.

...

Outside, the sun had finally warmed the morning. Harry walked slowly down the street, a smile on his lips, and watched the store windows and the men. But mostly the men.

There was the high school boy. Fresh and sharp-etched, with square hands and a square face. He even, it seemed to Harry, had a hint of squareness about his cock, which filled the space between his full thighs. Then there was the tall blond, with the hairless chest and long muscles. There was a traffic cop, attired only in sunglasses and a whistle, whose long dick would bounce off either leg as he moved the traffic with exaggerated motions. And the bus driver, smilingly handing a transfer to the man in the gray slacks with the blue V-neck sweater.

Harry's mouth dropped. Yes, a blue V-necked sweater, pearl gray shirt, and wing-tip shoes.

"Oh my God," said Harry. He leaped for the bus just as the door was beginning to close. The driver opened the door again and gave Harry a transfer and an irritated glance. Harry took a seat behind the man in the sweater, who was reading a paper and didn't appear to have seen him.

At the third stop Harry's anger overcame his fear and he moved forward, sitting beside the stranger. The man looked up and smiled and resumed reading the paper.

"Look," said Harry, "I want to talk to you."

The man didn't take his eyes from the paper. "Let's not get tiresome, all right?" He had a tight little smile that threatened to break into a grin.

A teen-ager sat in front of them, listening to a radio and tapping his tennis-shoed foot. This irritated Harry, but he couldn't decide why.

"What are you doing here?" demanded Harry.

"Oh, all right," said the man, folding the paper. "What do you think I'm doing here? I mean it's fairly obvious, isn't it?"

Harry put his hands on his bare knees. "It's not fair, it just isn't fair."

"Where'd you get the idea if had to be fair?" The man shook his head. "Grow up, Harry."

Harry began to feel his eyes grow wet and glanced out the opposite window, away from the stranger. A man stood on the street corner, adjusting the knot in his tie. Harry snuffled and tucked his T-shirt into his boxer shorts.

It was reversing. Not just going back to normal, but reversing. Harry watched as all the men around him began to become clothed. And as they became clothed he felt his own garments disappear.

The stranger sighed and patted Harry's shoulder. "Make the best of it Harry. It won't be that bad. After all, Johnny Carson actually looks better with his clothes on."

"But what about me?" Harry was trying to pull his T-shirt down to cover the area where his boxer shorts had been.

"Well," the stranger paused while running his eyes slowly over Harry, "you might learn to enjoy it. After all, I must say," a grin was spreading over his face, "except for a slight tendency to knock knees, you have very pleasant legs. Your cock is almost classic, although a bit small. Despite the unnecessary pounds..."

"Oh my God," Harry bolted from the seat.

As he leaped for the door, elbowing aside an elderly lady who was struggling up the aisle, Harry heard startled gasps behind him. The driver turned in his seat, his mouth opening in shock, then hardening to a grim line, and finally quivering at the corners. As Harry passed him he heard the beginning of a chuckle, then a throaty laugh. The others on the bus joined in and the laughing became a roar.

After running flat out for two blocks, Harry's aching side forced him to slow to a walk. He was lucky in that he had only six blocks to walk, but the day seemed to have become chillier. Along the way he picked up two small boys, who tagged behind him with a drum, and a slobbering bulldog, whose panting counterpointed the drum beats. He managed to outdistance the children, but the bulldog kept up with him, only stopping at the last corner where it sat and panted lovingly at his retreating backside.

As he reached his apartment house door, Jake walked out. He was dressed in a three-piece suit. Jake immediately began to talk about a rent increase which was rumored to be pending. As he talked Harry nervously tried to find someplace to put his hands. First he tried to put them in his pockets, but he didn't have pockets. Then he crossed them over himself, but that felt silly. Finally, he rested them on his hips—it seemed the only thing to do.

As he talked Jake looked down and discovered a loose shoelace. He bent down, continuing to talk, and tied it. He kept his head up as he did and talked into Harry's crotch. With a huge grin he stood up. "By the way, Harry," he patted his own vest, "that's quite an appendectomy scar you have there. I hope mine heals up as well. Right now it's new and red."

With that he turned away, and Harry went upstairs, wondering if he could apply for unemployment by mail, which grocery stores delivered, and if this wasn't a good time to read the letter from the rarely seen relative.

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(North side between 7th & 8th Avenues)

250 Book Center

**250 West 42nd Street
New York City**

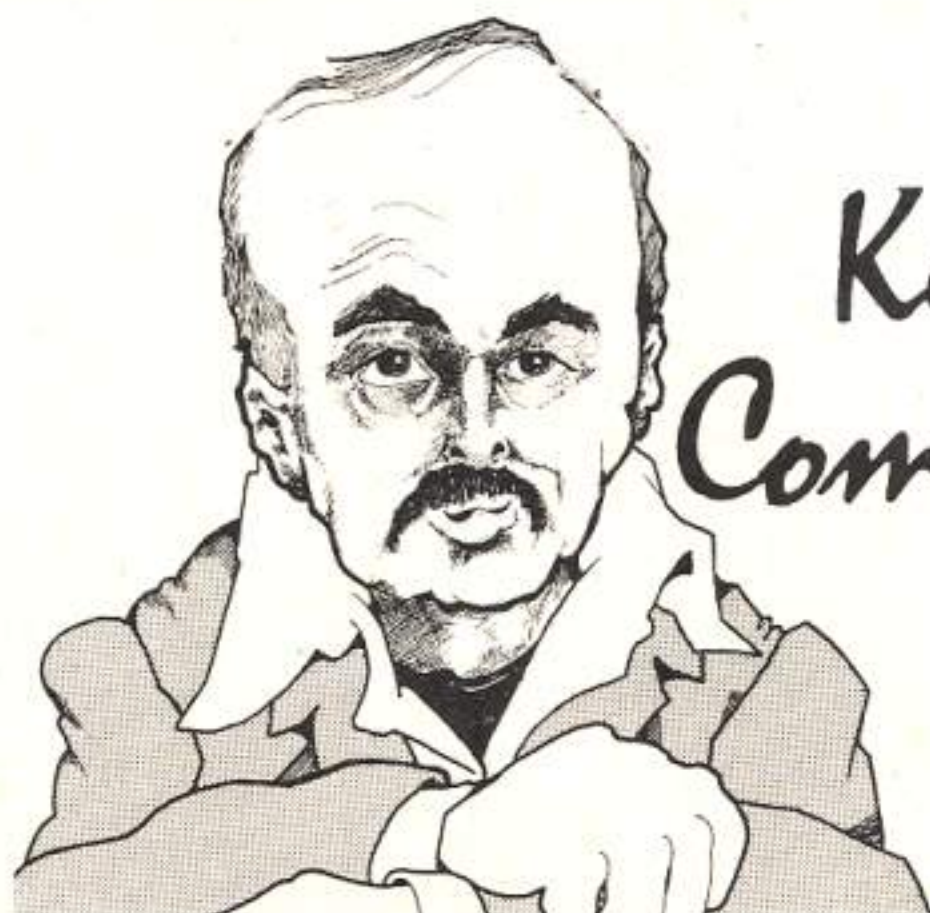
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"One of the few New York porn stores you can be seen entering without horrible embarrassment."

—The Village Voice

"New York's only semi-respectable x-rated bookshop."

—Time Magazine



Kepner's Comments

As the nation has passed and as various local communities approach their bicentennials (tricentennials for a few) we have surrendered the once tenaciously-held dogma that on these shores people of every background and persuasion must be melted down into a great homogeneity—which in practice meant that Italians and Poles, Catholics and Jews, were expected to erase or cover over the rough edges of their "old country" differences and to speak, act and dress by the standards of the White-Anglo-Protestant-hetero-male majority.

We have largely ceased to regard human differences as an evil or an unfortunate blemish to be overlooked or erased. If the melting pot has in fact melted away much that ought to have been preserved, we have come to appreciate the contributions made to the "main stream" by differing ethnic communities, religious and political persuasions, cultural styles and even affectional preferences.

If the gay community is something of a melting pot itself—drawing its members from all other sectors of society—it also has been increasingly committed to its own cultural integrity, as have some of the minorities within our minority.

El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciuncula was founded in 1781 near a much older Indian village, Yang Na. The 44 families of original settlers, or pobladores, were of mixed blood, and L.A. since has been significantly a community of communities.

When Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley recently appointed a committee of 44 persons to plan and carry out the city's Bicentennial celebra-

tions in 1980-81, he deliberately chose persons from the widest possible variety of background: bankers, minority community activists, college presidents, unionists, social workers, writers, Black, Jewish, Chicano, Oriental—and gay. This writer had the honor of being chosen to represent the gay community.

In the city's current budget-conscious mood, the "Los Angeles 200 Committee" must substantially raise its own funds. Subject to such funding, the committee will plan (and where necessary, produce) cultural, sports and business events and will publish an official Bicentennial History of the city. In all of that, we will be seeking gay input.

Here as in other communities across the land and around the world there have always been gays, though relatively few of them have intentionally left any record of their gayness. Certainly from the time of the great land booms of a century ago, Los Angeles has had a traceable gay community which has overlapped every other social grouping while retaining its own distinct quality. Tracing the existence of gays here, their contributions to city life and culture—and their tribulations—will be part of the committee's work.

It is high time that gays, as a group, make an open contribution to such civic ventures. The quality of gay input into this and similar celebrations of civic pride will be a measure of our increasing acceptance, as gays, into society. Gay financial support of events such as L.A.'s Bicentennial and other gay-related events can help our cause considerably, and can help all the communities in which we live.

—Jim Kepner

DISCO NEW YORK

by David Seare
photos by Mario Ruiz

From Les Mouches to Xenon to Ice Palace to Studio 54... Show me a disco in New York that isn't gay, and I'll show you a dull disco. Disco is gay if it's any good at all. Here in throbbing, pulsating New York, you can boogie from dawn 'til dawn down. For New York's disco scene is a multi-million dollar gay enterprise, a complete fantasy release. New York is the disco capital of the world.

Disco's roots, its drugs, its incessant beat stem from the very ethnic mix that defines New York City. Fast pace and tension find their ultimate expressions here in the gyrations of disco movement. Indeed, these energies at peak level are so intense it seems impossible there will ever be a day when this will all be passe, burnt out, nostalgia. Very gay indeed!

The recent International Disco Convention at the New York Hilton was a four-day extravaganza sponsored by *Billboard* Magazine, drawing thousands during Gay Pride Week into special suites designed with the latest neon decor, exhibiting extraordinary disco fashion, showcasing the latest disco recording stars and DJs. Casablanca's party on Friday night was held at Flamingo, while Donna Summer emceed the awards ceremonies at Xenon, which ran until the wee small hours of the morning.



Gay idols, such as Bobby Blankenship, former principle dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, can be seen frequently on Studio 54's exclusive dance floor.



At Xenon, you can watch Kovak and his magic organ entertain the troops.

Bee Gees got best album; Village People best cut and group; Casablanca best label; and Infinity's Jim Burgess capped awards for both Regional and National DJ. Our queen remains Donna Summer in that galaxy which includes Linda Clifford, Gloria Gaynor, Madleen Kane and the sultry Grace Jones.

But let's boogie down briefly to the different top New York discos—where gay energies are currently at their peak.

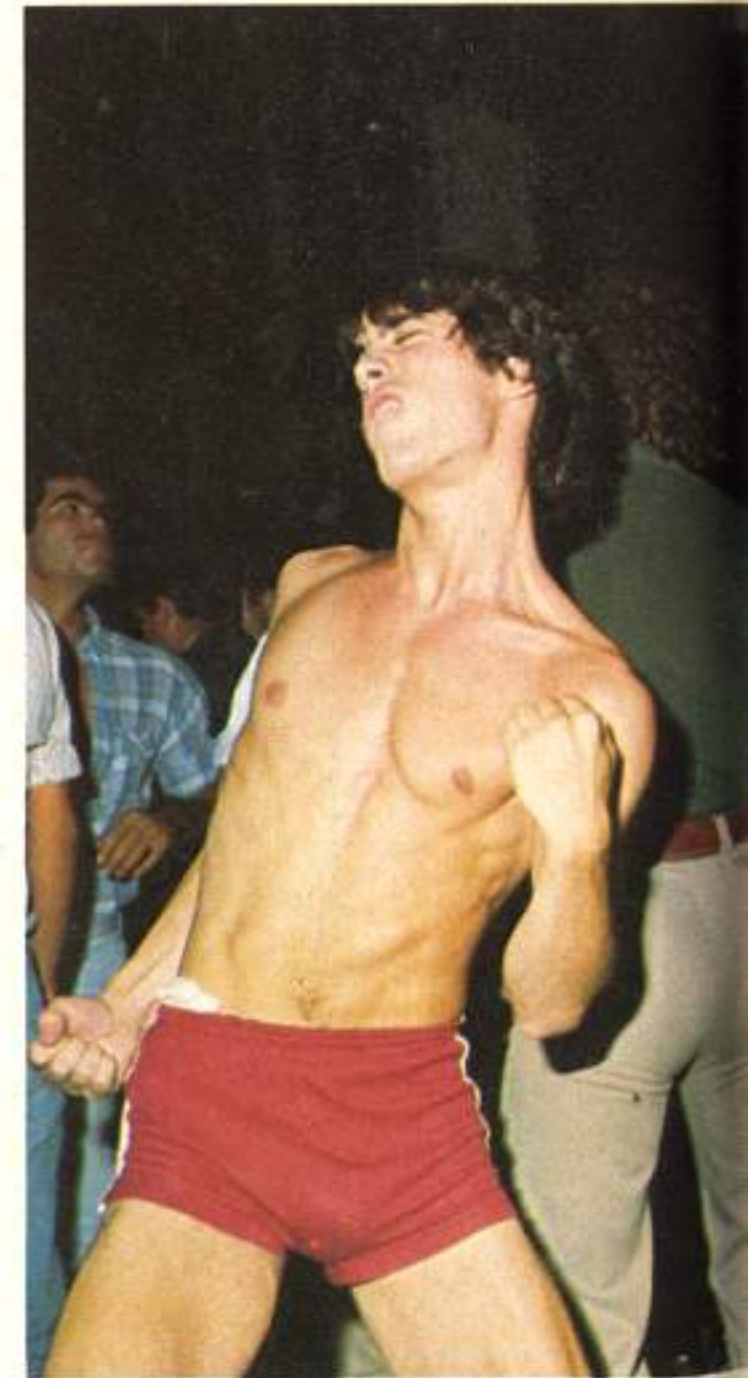
If we start with **Studio 54**, between Broadway and 7th Avenue, it is fair warning that if you can't get in within the first half-hour of waiting outside, pleading to the Mafia henchmen to let you in, leaning against the burgundy cordons in your crazy suit—if you're not on their immediate list of IN people, you're just not going to get in at all.

Studio 54 is the most talked about, publicized, celebrated disco in New York. It is here that Bianca threw her party for Mick and Rod Stewart hosted an evening for the rock-and-roll royalty. Here we can catch Liza singing "If My Friends Could See Me Now" to a balcony of rapt starfuckers. Throughout the Club there's the unmistakable sensation that if you're here, you're absolutely important in some way.

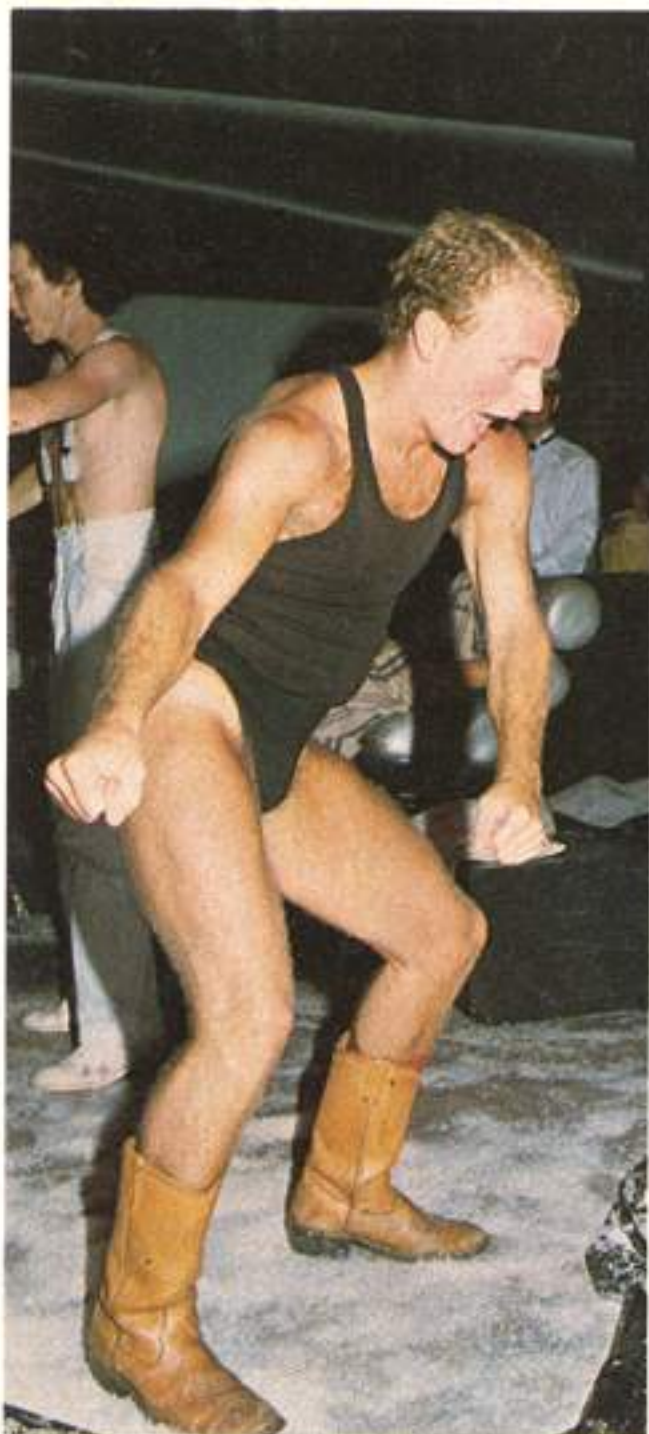
This old Fortune Opera House has seen more formal days, to be sure, once a studio for CBS where, ironically, "To Tell The Truth" was televised. Now it's



Dancing styles—and dancing stylists—give Xenon a universal appeal.



Studio 54 is noted for its hunky clientele.



When it comes to gettin' down, Studio 54 patrons show just how it's done.



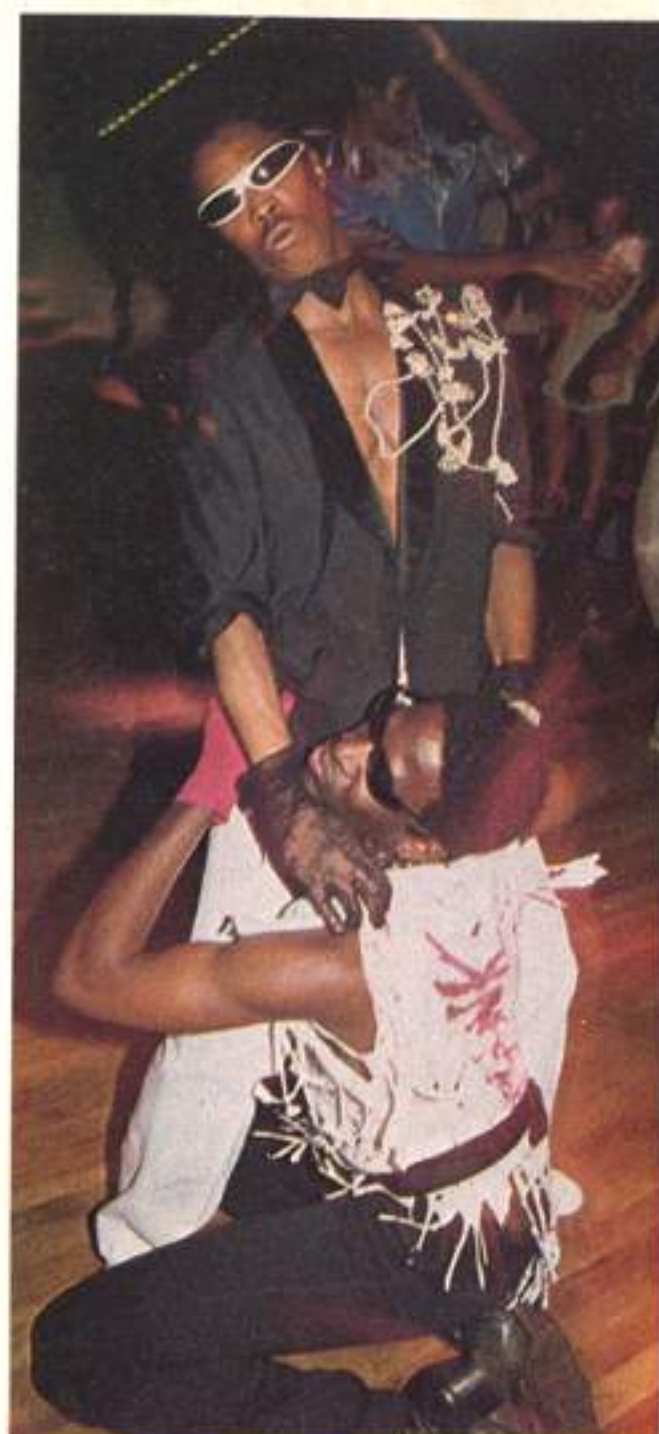
the Land of Oz, with oscillating strobe lights that descend in airplane strips straight onto the disco floor. Fog effects and plastic snow periodically play havoc with the dancers. And there are sets which fly in to change the environment at a moment's notice—from futuristic urban visuals to nonsense riddles. There is a volcano which erupts onto the dance floor. And plenty of little blond boys in boxer shorts dashing around with silent butlers to take away your every ash. Studio 54 is the epitome of the new theater of the 70's—theater that happens around you in an ever-changing stream of celebrities, effects and fantasies. It is designed by Jules Fisher, famed for his Broadway lighting designs and rock concert concepts (David Bowie). It is kept hopping to the beat of Richie Kaczor in the throne room deco disco booth.

Here at Studio 54 you're surrounded by theater—a Latino does his fan dance in one corner, while the tuxedo dances with his blow-up plastic fuck-me doll in another. Rollerina skates through in her prom dress. One gay editor (we won't mention names, will we?) created a mild sensation when he totally blissed out in the balcony and fell to the disco floor, 11 feet down. And, oh yes, the Victorian salon upstairs with its bevelled mirrors and floral arrangements is the perfect place to munch cookies and whisper sweet nothings to your new-found celebrity.

Moving along to Ice Palace 57 on 6th Avenue is a quick cab hop into another world of exciting visuals. Here, unlike most places, the bouncers immediately announce you have come to a gay disco. And everyone laughs and giggles and goes in—few ever walk away. Straight or gay. You are intrigued with the pale blue neon logo and inset lighting strips that lead you downstairs into a subterranean computer design of lights and levels the likes of which you've never experienced before. Ice Palace 57 and its sister, Ice Palace Fire Island, have been intricately designed by Graham Smith Associates, written up extensively in design journals, received numerous design awards. It is fantastic design. . . .

Inset spots dot the stairs and low-key "floating" effects keep the feeling of a cool grotto to counterpoint the disco heat. There is throb dimming, phase-in/phase-outs based on the music or run manually, spin spots working between the room zones. The effect is one of total movement everywhere, subtly pulling you into soft spotlight. "Cruise lights," the management calls them, noting that no one is ever completely still.

Perhaps the most astonishing design aspect of Ice Palace, however, is the neon. Over 475 feet of neon tubing hovers over the dance floor in jagged strips of magenta, blue and red. The neon circuitry emanates from a center



Xenon's atmosphere encourages dancers to do their own thing in their own way.

column on the dance floor and pulsates outward up onto the ceiling, like quick bolts of lightning radiating throughout the room, heaving tremendous orgasms of energy to electrify the entire space. And then the strobes fracture the effect and alter visual consciousness until the neon has spun itself off into a thousand directions. And, if this sounds too much, when you sit down, notice the little beaded inset strips which outline your platform couch. They, too, are in synch with the music though they barely quiver. Ice Palace is unified through this dynamic lighting concept and it is a must to experience.

As for the men at Ice Palace, they are perhaps the most attractive in the disco scene. Beige-on-beige blonds, for the most part. DJ Roy Thode is one of the humpiest spinners around. And the costumes and freaks seem fairly subdued in contrast to Studio 54.

On to New York, New York, but only briefly because it's not really gay enough, though they are working on it because it brings in business. I have to rave about one effect which is tremendous, however. Laser lights somehow beam out onto the dance space until they hit fog columns, encircle the fog like ribbon candy, then float across the

(continued on 86)
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Sailors and oysters. That's what most people think of when you mention Norfolk, Virginia. Hardly anyone thinks of the gay life, because this big Southern port has never been noted as a gay Mecca—and with good reason.

The reason is that this corner of Virginia is about fifteen years behind the times. Most new social movements take a decade or two to make an impression on the Norfolk area (also called "Tidewater Virginia"), and the gay movement is no exception. So at first glance, gay society here may seem closety, cliquish, and dull by New York or L.A. standards.

But even if Norfolk isn't Greenwich Village, you can still find plenty of good times and interesting people here if you know where to look. And if you've never heard much about the pleasures of Norfolk area, maybe it's partly because some folks here think they have a good thing and don't want too many outsiders to find out about it.

Actually, what most out-of-staters call "Norfolk" is a cluster of several cities around Hampton Roads, the big harbor at the southern end of Chesapeake Bay. On the south side of the harbor are Nor-



Newport News is one of the Tidewater cities servicing navy-oriented Norfolk.

"... even if Norfolk isn't Greenwich Village, you can still find plenty of good times and interesting people here if you know where to look."

Norfolk

by Larry White

folk, with its huge naval base; the big resort city of Virginia Beach; and Suffolk, Portsmouth, and Chesapeake, dull towns without much to recommend them to the visitor. Across Hampton Roads via a toll-free bridge/tunnel are Hampton and Newport News, and half-hour's drive west on Interstate 64 from Hampton takes you to the restored colonial capital, Williamsburg. It's a big area, and you'll probably need a car, because public transportation here isn't much to speak of.

So much for geography. What about the people?

First of all, don't prejudge Tidewater residents by what you may have heard before. Hampton Roads still suffers from the reputation it earned during World War II, when the locals, then mostly red-neck farmers and fishermen, treated the soldiers and sailors as something less than human. Remember that legendary sign, "Sailors and Dogs Keep Off the Grass"? The legend started here.

But attitudes have changed in Tidewater since then. Once suspicious of outsiders, residents of the Norfolk area have learned to welcome (if only for the



Hampton Roads' coliseum symbolizes the Norfolk area's current progressive trend.

money they bring) the hordes of tourists, merchant sailors, and military personnel who visit Hampton Roads every year, and in the last thirty years Norfolk has grown from a dingy backwater into a modern, cosmopolitan city by Southern standards.

The straight majority's views on gay life are changing here, too. Ensign Vernon Berg and T/Sgt. Leonard Matlovich, who both came out publicly while stationed at bases in the Hampton Roads area, showed local residents that gays could still be clean-cut American boys. And while people around the harbor still aren't really comfortable with the idea of equal rights for homosexuals (they proved that by filling Norfolk's convention center to overflowing for Anita Bryant's "New Creation Crusade" last year), most of them seem willing to admit that gays might not pose a threat to children, national security, and the laws of nature. Gay-baiting has never been the popular sport here that it has been in some other Southern states and except for some howls from born-again Christians, there has been little open opposition to the gay rights movement in this part of Virginia.

Having struck a truce of sorts with the straight community, Norfolk's gays are more visible today than ever before. Norfolk has a gay hotline, several gay groups at local colleges and universities, and a Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus which provides counseling for homosexuals. Some gay periodicals are available at local newsstands; and media coverage of Hampton Roads' homosexuals, while still not extensive, has expanded greatly in the last five years. *Metro*, Norfolk's lively urban magazine, has given the gay community a favorable press, and even the conservative local papers have been fairly discreet in their criticism of gay lifestyles.

But Tidewater's gay people still keep a relatively low profile, compared to many homosexuals in many other U.S. cities, for several reasons.

First, the gay community is still badly fragmented by race and gender prejudices, which have made it difficult to form a strong gay citizens' group. "We need something—a citizens' lobby or a newspaper or something—that will give the gay community a single, loud voice here," a Newport News woman said recently. "Otherwise we'll continue to be just a diffuse bunch of individuals, speaking with many voices."

Second, local gays see what happened in Miami and other cities when gays have tried to assert their rights, and are afraid to rock the boat. A display of gay solidarity and strength, Tidewater's homosexuals fear, might inspire born-again Christians, with their tremendous wealth and influence in the media, to try to make Tidewater another Miami.

Finally, bars have to keep a very low

profile because Virginia law makes it a crime to serve a drink to a known homosexual. So many gays are unaware of the major bars and are cut off from fellowship with other homosexuals. As a result, gay society here remains largely invisible, even to lifelong residents of the area.

But even if Tidewater's gay society is hard to locate at times, there's still plenty to do and see in the area. First things first. What about bars?

The most popular places are **Mickey's Tavern** (135 Brooke Ave., downtown Norfolk), the **Ritz Tavern** (131 Brooke Ave., near Mickey's), the **Nickelodeon** (118 W. City Hall Ave., downtown Norfolk) and the **Cue Club** (4601 Killam Ave., Norfolk, near old Dominion University). The Nickelodeon is a restaurant-bar serving food, beer, and wine, with dancing. There's a \$1.00 cover charge on weekends. Mickey's and the Ritz are cruising bars offering beer and no dancing; the latter is Western in character, the former butch. (These three establishments may not be at their current addresses much longer; the Norfolk Redevelopment Authority is thinking of having them torn down, along with some other buildings in the downtown section, as part of its plan to revitalize the inner city.)

At present the owners are trying to keep the city from making them move, but the future of the bars is still uncertain. The owners do plan to relocate in Norfolk if forced to leave their present locations, but that shouldn't happen until the fall sometime. So if you're in Norfolk after October 1 or so, ask around. The Cue is a large disco/lounge with a generally young clientele, and serves beer and food. If you hear reports of a gay disco/restaurant in Williamsburg, forget it; the place went straight two years ago.

Cruising areas change with the seasons. Summer cruising is probably best around 21st St. in Virginia Beach (one source calls it "the spot"), Buckroe Beach in Hampton, and Yorktown Beach on the York River near Williamsburg. Cruising also seems fair-to-good along Buckroe Beach during the winter, if you don't mind a chill wind blowing in off the water. But during the cold season, most cruising moves indoors to the bars and enclosed shopping malls—though one source says the malls are "pretty unpromising ground" and "it's hard to pick anyone up there." Foreign sailors can make cruising in downtown Newport News interesting at any time of the year, but don't bother with the old bus station near the Victory Arch. It may have been cruisy in the past, but no more.

As for the cruisers with red lights on top, Hampton Roads gays have reported harassment from police on occasion, and sometimes you will find unusually large numbers of police cars parked along certain beaches. But on the whole,

Tidewater's homosexuals don't seem too worried about police persecution, and there's no evidence of any organized anti-gay crusade on the part of the local cops. Plainclothesmen do appear in bars but are easy to recognize. Norfolk area gays report: "They still wear coats and ties."

When you're not socializing, you'll want to sleep. The **Holiday Inn Scope** in Norfolk is smack in the middle of the downtown area and is easy to reach via the Interstate. Also convenient is the long string of motels on Mercury Boulevard, just off Interstate 64 in Hampton. But an old Scotch miser sends this warning: don't stay at Virginia Beach during the summer unless you're prepared to pay through the nose and several other openings as well. Bills of \$500 for a weekend at some Beach hotels aren't unheard of.

Now, don't misunderstand. By all means go to Virginia Beach if you're there in the summer. The ocean is lovely, surfing can be good, the sands are warm underfoot, and some of the people you meet there will live in your dreams the rest of your life. But the Beach is full of tourist traps and will consume all your money if you let it. The best plan is to probably make the Beach a one-day visit.

If you arrive at the Beach after nine a.m., parking can be hell. Try parking on one of the back streets, like Baltic or Arctic Ave., and walk a few blocks to the ocean. The closer you park to the Beach itself, the greater the chance you'll take a reserved parking space by accident and have to pay \$50 to reclaim your car.

At the other end of Tidewater is Virginia's "colonial Triangle"—Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Jamestown. Restored by the Rockefellers forty years ago, Colonial Williamsburg occupies about a square mile of the town and includes a couple-dozen restored buildings, notably the Capitol and the Governor's Mansion (see if you can find the owl on the wallpaper). For the moment, admission is free to most attractions. But don't expect to find much gay life in Williamsburg—it's a small city.

There's more action along Yorktown Beach, a narrow strip of sand between a steel bridge and an oil refinery on the York River, about twenty-minutes' drive from Williamsburg on the Colonial Parkway. But except for the cruising, which is better in Newport News and Norfolk anyway, Yorktown doesn't have too much to recommend it. Parking is next to impossible in the tourist season; and if you enjoy lying on a beach and looking at an oil refinery, you might as well take your vacation in New Jersey. Check out Yorktown if you like, but don't spend too much time there. The same goes for Jamestown, unless you're into touring reconstructed forts and watching glassblowers make bottles.

Are there any places to avoid in Tide-

(continued on 89)



POSTMARK: STOCKHOLM

The photos on these pages are from the Postcard Collection created by 36-year-old Victor Arimondi. A resident of Stockholm, Victor was born in Italy and has lived, at one time or another, in Zurich, Milan, Rome, Montreal, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, London, and New York. In 1972, while working in London as a model, he decided to take up photography as a career. His extensive background in fashion design has strongly influenced his work. 'I enjoy creating a non-erotic but sexual mood in my photos,' Victor says, leaving it up to the individual viewer to determine the success of his efforts.





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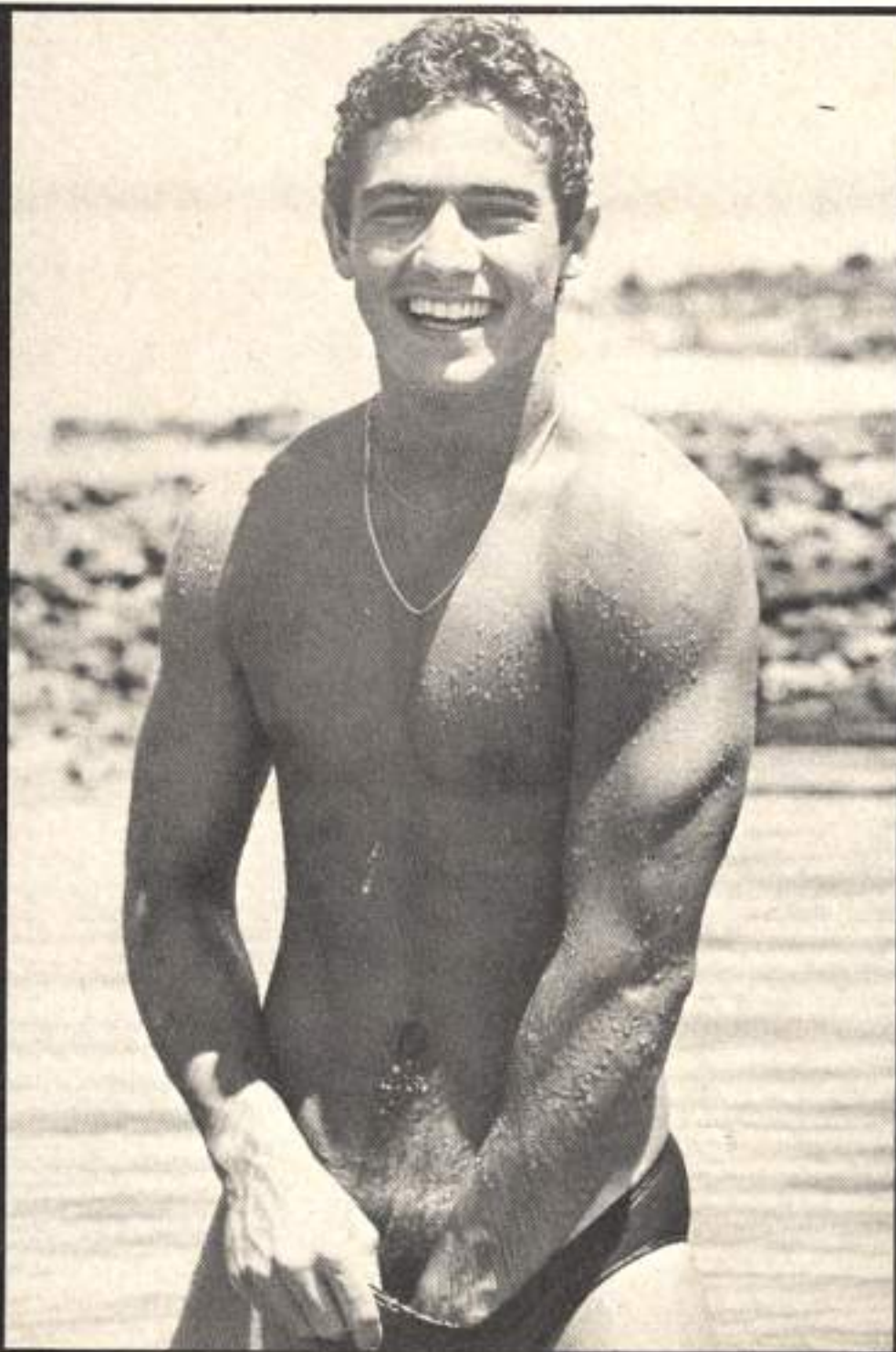
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PEOPLE

Scott Forbes

Success has not changed him. He's one of the most successful businessmen in the gay world, yet he drives the same '65 Corvette he's driven for years, does not travel and has not been to Europe, wears Levi's and a T-shirt to work, and only recently gave in and bought a modest house of his own.

He is Scott Forbes. Young, good-looking, trim, personable. On a Saturday night in West Hollywood's famed **Studio One** disco-cabaret he looks like any number of equally hot-looking young men. With one difference—he owns the place.

He not only owns it. He operates it. Seven days a week. Long hours nearly every day of the year. So Europe's out. It's his baby and it runs as smoothly as the needle on a Donna Summer record because he is always there. Advising, suggesting, demanding, cajoling, creating, beating the *Studio One* drum.

It's been about five years since he took over a huge white elephant of a warehouse that used to be the home of Hollywood's elite Factory nightclub and pioneered the disco phenomenon by opening *Studio One*. The rest is history. The *L.A. Times* put his picture in the paper and called him "King of the Disco."

The profile he keeps is a little less prominent than John Travolta, though. This is the first real "profile" ever written about him. And hardly anyone jamming the packed, throbbing dance floor would know him from Adam. He keeps too busy to promote himself, and he likes it that way.

He keeps so busy, in fact, that vacations are out. So busy running the mammoth operation that he's resisted all

"It's been about five years since he took over a huge white elephant of a warehouse . . . and pioneered the disco phenomenon by opening *Studio One*."



overtures to franchise *Studio Ones* all over the country and, indeed, the world. There may be other, more expensive, bigger discos in the world today, but *Studio One* was one of the first. And it's known by name the world over. Movies and TV shows are shot there. The big-

gest names in the business rub elbows with the shirtless, sweating gay crowd any night of the week. Celebrities compete for the best tables in the **Backlot** cabaret—where people like Wayland Flowers (and Madame) got their start. The nitery is so popular for



acts performing or trying out their acts pre-Las Vegas that the local trades and press review regularly. It has transcended the label of a "gay" nitespot and has become one of the spots to be in Los Angeles.

But lest you worry, *Studio One* has not forgotten its roots or its hard-core clientele. It keeps trouble out by one of the toughest screening entrances in the business. Forbes says proudly there has never been an arrest in the entire five years it's been open. Parties are held often. And *Studio One* remains an active force in the gay community.

Much of the profit is poured back into the place in constant change and improvement. This year alone, \$44,000 has been invested in a new light show and sound system. More decibels to blow your mind. What other place bothers to put a fish tank in the men's room?

But you cannot talk about the *Studio One* phenomenon without talking about Scott Forbes. A poor Jewish boy from Boston's ghetto, he put himself through college with maintenance man jobs and made himself into one of West Hollywood's most suc-

cessful optometrists. Yes, he did Elton John's eyes! And after you have provided eye-glasses for Elton John, word gets around.

But Forbes had a dream. The Factory flopped and there was this huge hulking warehouse sticking out like a sore thumb right in the heart of West Hollywood's "Boys Town." He took it over one night a week and tried out his disco plan. It was enough to convince him.

So, with the help of some investor friends, he took it over and transformed it into a gay guy's dream. Any night of the week, 1,000 tight and tanned disco hunks pack the dance floor. *Playgirl* center-folds man the bars. Hot little numbers in skin-hugging basketball silks scurry about with drinks in hand. The ultimate sound system pounds out the beat. Whistles blow, tambourines pick up the beat, shirts come off, poppers are thrust into noses, and outside the whole damn building looks like it's throbbing.

But still, despite his 16,000-square-foot, 104-employee empire, Forbes has changed little. He's one of those people you see five years later and they look the same.

Other than his work, he indulges himself little. Or if he does, we don't know about it. His escapades are not famous. He says he likes escaping it all at home quietly with a friend—he prefers the 18-21-year-olds. He wouldn't have to worry about losing a date in the crowds—they're too young to get in. Old enough, but pretty young all over.

So his only indulgence is his house. Modest by successful-businessman standards, but nice for the rest of us. Above the Sunset Strip (no view) and with a big pool which he likes to jump into to wake up mornings. The mid-

night skinny-dipping is something we'll never know.

If he has any spare moments, he spends them sailing weekend afternoons, or more likely working with one of his many gay community groups. He is president of the Tavern Guild (gay bar owners), a director of the Gay Community Services Center, etc. He wisely says one has to stay in touch with what's happening.

What's happening is that business is booming. In West Hollywood and everywhere else. So he's finally making his move. He has bought out two of his original partners in *Studio One* and he will have opened, by the time this appears in print, a huge new business down the street called "Boys Town"—with bar, restaurant and clothing shop all in one complex. And that's not all. He has taken over the premises of L.A.'s old Third Street Baths and transformed it as only Scott Forbes can.

"I like to think of myself as a producer," he says. Not disco king, not businessman, not bar owner and operator, but producer. Yes, he admits unashamedly, he wants an Oscar. Obviously some of that celebrity elbow-rubbing has rubbed off. He eventually wants to produce movies. Like his good friend Allan Carr, producer of *Grease* and Tinseltown's legendary party-giver. Well, in this town they say it's all who you know . . .

Our talk is interrupted by current *Backlot* chanteuse Pattie Brooks (*Thank God It's Friday*), who wants some water to take her vitamins with. Forbes jumps and gives her Perrier water. He pours it into a glass, starts to hand it to her and then thinks twice. He even squeezes a lime in it. No doubt about it—he'll end up with his Oscar.

—John Roberts

Deney Terrio

Don't tell anyone, but that big solo dance John Travolta steamed

the steps, which was the tango hustle, I saw at Studio One," Terrio recalled as he thoughtfully swizzled a very dry vodka martini.

"I saw two guys that were



Photo by Julian Wasser



"So I said, 'I gotta figure out some way to support myself....'"



Photo by Larry Sirauther

up the screen with in *Saturday Night Fever* was born on the cavernous dance floor at a gay disco—Hollywood's **Studio One**, to be exact. **IN TOUCH** became privy to this bit of inside info right from the grinning lips of kinetic Deney Terrio, the actor/dancer/choreographer who coached Travolta for the role: "One of

so incredible, doing it!" the ascendant performer reported. "When they threw their heads back, and they spun, I said 'that definitely has to be used!' You see, I liked the power of what I saw in their body movement, and developed it, and put it into a step where it would look good

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on John and a girl. But, yes, that tango hustle was actually developed at Studio One, through my eyes."

Deney Terrio (his mother's name: "she's my favorite, the love of my life") has been observing and developing body movements as far back as he can remember, to his childhood in Titusville, Florida, where "there were four of us children and the three others were big, strong, they played football, baseball, and I had no sports to go into. But that dancing on 'American Bandstand' thrilled me.

"I've always wanted to be a singer and an actor, and it's a natural thing for me to watch somebody's body movement, pick up their movements. I've always been able to walk and imitate people incredibly—monkeys, animals, anything. So that's how I got into developing my own steps." Those restless feet were not about to be restricted to southern Florida, so, after a year at Broward, Deney decided to "jump" to California.

"I hitched a ride out here with some friends," he relates, furry-backed hands in constant motion, "and they left in two weeks, and left me on the beach with my suitcases. So I said, 'I gotta figure out some way to support myself—it's either work in a gas station or do something' So I went to a night club, and I saw a dance contest, and I said, 'well, that looks pretty easy,' and watched all their steps.

"I went home for a week and worked on their steps and came back and I won. They paid me thirty-five dollars. So I found three, four, five clubs in the area that ran contests, and I did it every night. And I managed to make 150 bucks a week. That's how I survived. I'd had no training, just my eyes. I watched people do splits and Russian leaps and things and then just figured out how to do it. There was no hesitation. I would see it done, I would watch how the knee bent, the ankle, and I would just do it. The love of it, I think, has a lot to do with it.

The initial major boost to Deney's career came when Toni Basil, who put The Lockers dance group together, caught our slim-hipped exhibi-

tionist at one of those dance contests and "asked me to come down for a rehearsal." The eager anglo (Italian-French Canadian forebears) responded with alacrity and "ended up being the only white male" ever to dance with the popular contemporary black group—on TV's "Roberta Flack Special" in 1974. He was barely 21 at the time.

This led to The Greasy Kids, a group (formed especially for the Las Vegas Hilton) of which Deney became line captain because the original leader, in the course of a knee slide across the rough floor during a rehearsal, snagged the rhinestones studding his stacked shoes and suffered a double hernia. Hence, when Dick Clark did his "Good Ol' Rock 'n' Roll" series from Vegas, Deney was right in the forefront of things and "went on from there, leading groups and teaching."

The leap into choreography, which brought about his association with Travolta, came about, the happy bachelor recalls with a modest shake of his sexily-shaggy black hair, "out of necessity. I've always been very competitive when it comes to something that I do well, and being in the line with seven or eight other people, I had to be the best. So, in competing, I became the best. Now, becoming the best, you must prove it, and that's by knowing what you do. So that's how I got into choreography.

"And then I ran into Bob Lamon, who is John Travolta's manager, and we started talking about what was then called *Tribal Rites of the New Saturday Night*. But he said, 'I can't use you, with your dark hair and light eyes—I've got John Travolta.' So I said, 'Jeez, I'll do anything, whadaya got? I need the work.' Because I was hungry at the time. And he said that this was going to be a disco movie, so I told him, 'I know everything about disco, I know how the dance floor is, I know the lights, the music, I've even had about six years of my own steps that I've created.' And he said, 'Fine,' and set up a meeting with John Travolta and myself. We got together and talked, and then we went

into rehearsal the next week. And that's how it started, the three and a half to four months with John.

"Now, John is a very dedicated actor, but disco is such a completely different feel. It's a feel of domination, command, attitude," he continued, his voice becoming huskily intense, "and the sexual thing, which almost has a touch of the fifties, getting into Elvis the Pelvis. There are bumps and grinds and looking at the women like, you know, 'take it!'—trying to promote and arouse the sexuality. When John got with me, I had to bring that out in him, and we just seemed to click!" Deney's only manifestation of regret is that Travolta didn't

"There are bumps and grinds and looking . . . like, you know, 'take it!'—trying to promote and arouse the sexuality."

"go to bat" for him regarding the all-important screen credits.

With the release and unprecedented success of *Saturday Night Fever*, Deney, still without representation, had to "push myself," he says guilelessly, "with people like you. I sent my picture and bio and everything to all the shows, and Merv Griffin picked me up—it was the most outrageous thing I've ever done in my life!

"I've always been a Fred Astaire fan—he was the greatest dancer ever to live and probably who ever will. Now, I did the Merv Griffin show, and I sat next to him, did a dance number for him, and when Merv asked him 'What do you look for in a great dancer?' he says 'I look for attitude, expression, and everything,' and Fred Astaire patted me on the arm and said, 'like this man right here.' And that's the greatest thing that ever happened to me! Just him touching me on the arm! I have the tape of that show in a vault! That was the greatest honor that has ever been bestowed on me."

He muses a moment in

wonderment, then continues, "in Merv Griffin I've found a great friend in the business," and proves it by the fact that after one of the "Merv Griffin Goes Disco" shows from Caesar's Palace, on which he danced with the legendary Regine, "we sat down—Merv Griffin, myself, Ernie Chambers (who produced Tony Orlando and Dawn, and The Smothers Brothers) and we said 'Let's put a show together'—shades of Mickey Rooney!—"because Merv had just recently bought T.A.V. So I worked out the dance couples and a 'Step-of-the-Week' and became the host and the M.C. of the show, which we call 'Dance Fever.'

"So we put it together, and it was like a miracle—it just clicked! Everything worked out. Twentieth Century-Fox saw it, they liked it, and they bought it. Now they're talking to CBS and a few of the other people, and they're gettin' it syndicated."

Also part of the burgeoning career of Deney Terrio at the time of this IN TOUCH interview was a guest shot as a playboy dancer on "Love Boat" in an episode which will air this fall, but he was mostly excited ("because I've always been a closet actor") about the prospect of playing the lead in a TV sitcom already set as a mid-season replacement, called "Stayin' Alive." This came about in a typical industry combination of luck, connections, and talent: "Don Silverman, who is helping cast for 'Stayin' Alive,'" Deney begins the unraveling, "ran into Pat Cooper, the comedian.

"Now, I had done a Mike Douglas Show with Pat Cooper, and he told Don Silverman, 'This guy set the show on fire with his dancing, so you should at least just look at him for the lead.' So they asked me to come down to Paramount. So I went down and read for Bob Hoffman, who is in charge of casting there, and I showed him a tape of myself on the Merv Griffin Show, and they all liked it. I've been back for three or four calls, for the lead, so it looks real good."

And so, one might add, does Deney Terrio—and his future.

—Jeremy Hughes



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LEONARDO

A Brush With Gayness

by William R. Russo

"After five hundred years, the charges of sodomy remain the physical evidence of Leonardo's sexual preference."

Michaelangelo has received all the gay attention as the sensation of the Italian Renaissance, but his arch-rival was most certainly also gay—however more elegant and somewhat more discreet. Leonardo da Vinci did not paint or sculpt the bold, muscular nudes of his younger competitor, yet his brush certainly reveals a homoerotic sensitivity and his background tends to indicate his sexual preference.

As the illegitimate son of a well-to-do businessman, Leonardo was apprenticed to a Florentine painter's studio when he was twelve, and he quickly became part of the gay metier of the Quattrocento. He achieved fame early in his life by committing himself to his work, but Leonardo still had time for a twenty year dalliance with a young waif whom he made his ward and—more often—his model in several major works of art, including possibly the *Mona Lisa*. Of course, Michaelangelo said the mysteriously smirking lady was probably Leonardo himself. The model's identity has been a perplexing question for years: certainly Leonardo often painted women, but usually this was for a commission. His brush was less to kind to these sitters. The *Lady with Ermine* resembles the little rodent she holds in her hands.

Leonardo's mother, a peasant woman named Caterina, had to surrender the infant to her husband shortly after the son's birth. She and Leonardo were forbidden to socialize thereafter, although they continued to live in the same small village. Sigmund Freud wrote an entire psychological study of Leonardo's works in terms of this central conflict over the loss of his mother. The study also documents how little understanding of homosexuality Freud had. Leonardo's reserved and mysterious personality—an exquisite image he cultivated—has perplexed some of the greatest minds.

After Leonardo was apprenticed to Verrocchio, the boy's talent grew limitlessly. He was said to be attractive and often served as a model himself. Some of the work from Verrocchio's shop contains sculptures or painting wherein an epicene boy with a Mona Lisa smile is the model; that, it is contended, was Leonardo. Verrocchio's famous sculpture of *David* may well be a representation of Leonardo at age twelve. By the 1470s the model became better known as an artist. Prestigious guilds recognized his talent, and his fame was assured while he was still in his twenties.



As one might expect, one of the earliest documents on Leonardo's life is a certain arrest record. In 1474, at the age of twenty-two, someone made anonymous charges against the young artist, who was then Verrocchio's primary assistant. After five hundred years, the charges of sodomy remain as the physical evidence of Leonardo's sexual preference. The figure he was linked to was apparently a model in the studios, who also happened to be the son of a high-ranking

official. For that reason, the charges were dropped on the condition that such accusations were not to occur again. Leonardo became more discreet.

According to Leonardo's notebooks (those that have been found), he was too engrossed in his work for personal attachments. Over the next fifteen years, he achieved a reputation as a wit, raconteur, and fashionplate at the court of Lodovico Sforza. During the day Leonardo would entertain ladies of the court with his verbal skills, but by night he was engaged in activities that were thought to be on the level of the black arts: he did extraordinary anatomical sketches from bodies he dissected under the most crude conditions. He boasted once to have thoroughly examined the cadavers of thirty men, women, and children. At this time is evident his repugnance for the heterosexual reproductive act—and his fascination with male genitalia. He drew minutely detailed pictures of the male sexual organs. (It was apparently all done in the name of science.)

In the year 1490 a ten-year-old boy came into Leonardo's household. The boy was named Salai, and he quickly became Leonardo's favorite. Yet, "thievish, mendacious, willful, gluttonous" were the marginal notes the artist wrote in his diary about the rebellious boy. The androgynous child grew into a handsome young man who wore his hair in a mop of curls in order to please Leonardo. There is one sketch of Salai, at age sixteen, in which he appears to be a sensual butch who has the same kind of erotic lips as seen on *Mona Lisa*. Leonardo spared no expense on his young friend. References to money spent on Salai abound in the notebooks. Fancy shirts, jackets, cloaks for Salai are all documented. At one point, Leonard wrote: "Three gold

(continued on 92)

In the following Disco Sampler (which is not intended to be all-inclusive), states/provinces—and the cities within them—are listed alphabetically. The area code for each city appears in parenthesis beside it. Information includes the disco name, address, zip code, phone number (in parenthesis),

hours and days open, whether it serves liquor (L), beer and wine only (B/W), food (F) or no food (nF), sandwiches and snacks only (S), the percentage mix of its crowd (mg = male gay, fg = female gay, s = straight), and pertinent supplemental information. The abbreviation ah found in some listings refers to "after hours."

A DISCO SAMP

ARIZONA

Phoenix (602)

His Co. Disco, 3839A N. 16th St. 85016. (248-9580) 8pm-1am daily (ah Fri.-Sat.). L,F. 80%mg, 20%fg.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver (604)

The Gandydancer, 1222 Hamilton St. (684-7321) 8:30pm-2am Mon.-Sat. L,nF. 100%mg. 2 dance floors, lounge, cruise bar. Capacity 280.

CALIFORNIA

Hawthorne (213)

Monroe Disco, 5201 W. Rosecrans 90250. (679-7765) 4pm-2am Mon.-Sat., 2pm-2am Sun. L,F. 90%mg. \$.85 well drinks Fri.-Sun.

Los Angeles (213)

Circus Disco, 6648 Lexington Ave. 90038. (462-1291) 9pm-2am Mon.-Fri., 9pm-4am Sat., 6pm-2am Sun. L,F. 80%mg, 10%fg, 10% s. 4,000-watt Quad sound system, only Sound Sweep on West Coast. 3,200 sq.ft. floating wood dance floor, continuous circus acts.

Odyssey, 8471-77 Beverly Blvd., W. Hollywood 90048. (658-8106) 9pm-4am Sun.-Thurs., 9pm-5am Fri.-Sat. No alcohol,F. 70%mg, 15%fg, 15% s. 7rms on 3 flrs. Large outdoor patio, restaurant, upstairs lounge, balcony, game room, light show. 18 and over. No headwear or costumes except for special events.

The Office, 13817 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks 91423. (981-6942) 11am-2am daily, L,F. 90%mg. 3 bars, show Sun., nightly entertainment in dining area.

Scandals, 1635 N. La Brea Ave. 90028. (851-7771) 9pm-2am daily. L,F. Too new to have established mix. 400-seat showroom w/Las Vegas-type entertainment. Restaurant and private club. No hats, open-toe shoes.

Studio One, 652 N. LaPeer, W. Hollywood 90069. (659-0472) 9:30pm-2am daily. L,F. 75%mg, 15%fg, 10% s. Backlot showroom w/top-name entertainment, 2 shows nightly (9:30, 11:15). No hats, open-toe shoes.

Palm Springs (714)

G.A.F., 68-555 E. Ramon Rd. 92262. (328-9079) 9pm-2am daily. L,nF. 90%mg., 9%fg.

Redondo Beach (213)

Lost & Found Club, 2105 Artesia Blvd. 90276. (371-7859) 2pm-2am Mon.-Fri. Noon-2am Sat.-Sun. L,nF. 98%mg, 2%fg.

San Diego (714)

West Coast Production Company, 1845 Hancock St. 92110. (295-3724) 9pm-2am daily. L. 90%mg. Computerized light show, multi-level bar/disco, patio bar. No shower thongs or flip-flops (sandals ok).

San Francisco (415)

Alfies, 2140 Market St. 94114. (626-2543) 9pm-2am Mon.-Sat., 4pm-2am Sun. L,nF. 99%mg. \$1 cover (good for one drink weekdays). No sandals.

Frisco Saloon, 60 6th St. 94103. (863-5314) 6am-2am daily. L,nF. 90%mg. Live band Thurs., go-go boy contest Sat. Shoes required.



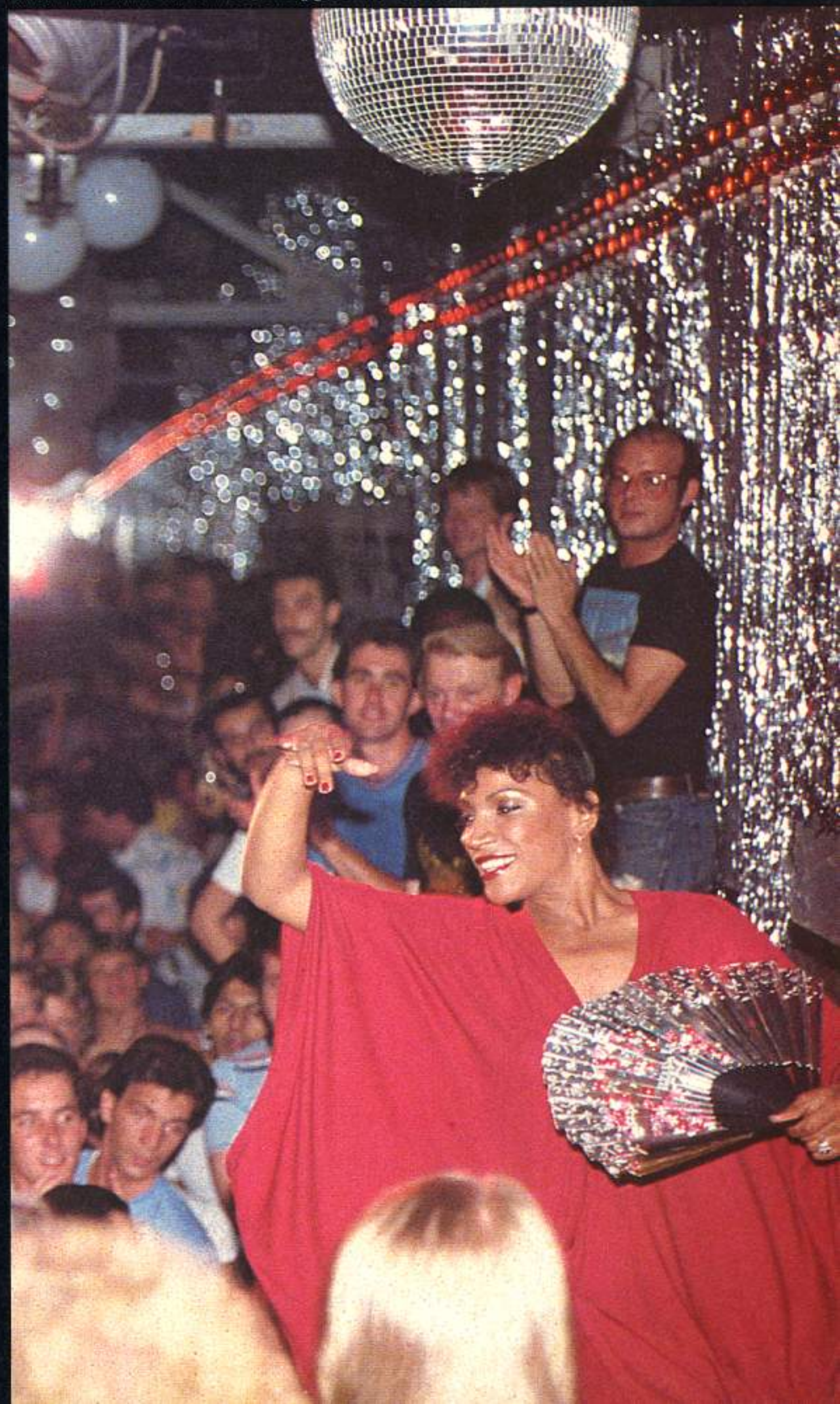
Photo by Mario Ruiz

When they go to the dogs at New York's Studio 54, they really go to the dogs.

No matter where you live, or where you travel, in the United States or Canada, you're likely to be within hailing distance of a gay disco. Here's an inside look at some of the more popular dancing palaces, and the type of action you're likely to find in them.

LER

Patti Brooks took time out from her *Backlot* gig to enliven Studio One's crowd.



I-Beam, 1748 Haight St. 94117. (668-6006) 9pm-2am daily. L,nF. 90%mg, 5%fg, 5% s. \$1 cover weekdays, \$3 cover weekends. 2,000 sq. ft. dance floor, game room. 1st anniversary party planned Oct. 20. No sandals.

Oil Can Harry's, 709 Larkin St. 94109. (928-9660) 9pm-2am daily. L,nF. 80%mg, 10%fg, 10% s. 1,600 sq. ft. dance floor, hot sound system, go-go dancer. No sandals.

Trocadero Transfer, 520 4th St. 94107. (495-6620) 11pm-dawn Wed.-Sun. No alcohol. 80%mg. 4,000 sq. ft. dance floor, 10,000 watts of sound. Buddy Night Thurs. Membership (\$75 year, \$40 per 6 mo., plus \$4 cover weekdays, \$5 cover weekends. Card holder guests pay \$6 cover weekdays, \$7 weekends). Sponsoring Hawaii trip in Sept.—call for info.

COLORADO

Denver (303)

The Broadway, 1260 Broadway 80203. (861-0478) 9pm-2am Wed.-Sat. L,F. 90%mg, 10%fg. \$.50 well drinks/beer Wed.-Thurs., \$1 lunch Thurs. Restaurant open 11:30am-2:30pm Mon.-Fri.

CONNECTICUT

Westport (203)

The Brook, 919 Post Rd. East 06880. (226-6204) L,nF. 75%mg, 20%fg, 5% s. Patio. Tea dance 4-7 Sun., 2-for-1 drinks Wed.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (202)

Lost & Found, 56 L St., S.E. 20003. (488-1200) 7pm-2am Mon.-Thurs., 7pm-3am Fri.-Sat., Noon-2am Sun. L,F. 99%mg. 3



San Francisco's **Trocadero Transfer** offers bay area discoers an atmosphere heavy on fantasy and a clientele heavy on hunk.

bars in main disco area, cruise room ("The Attic"). Dinners nightly, brunch Sun. noon-4pm.

FLORIDA

Jacksonville (904)

Country Palace, 527 N. Main St. Rear 32202. (353-5216) 4pm-2am Mon.-Sat. L.S. 75%mg, 25%fg. Happy Hour 4pm-7pm, 2 shows nightly Fri.-Sat.

Miami (305)

13 Buttons, 2998 N.W. No. River Dr. 33142. (638-1118) 7pm-5am daily. L.F. 100%mg. Membership club. Slide show, outdoor patio w/bar-b-que, live entertainment Thurs. & some Sun., contests, 2-for-1 drinks 7pm-11pm.

Orlando (305)

Odds & Ends Club/End Zone Disco, 4910 Edgewater Dr. 32810. (293-9733) 9pm-2am daily. B/W.S. 80%mg, 20%fg. Cruise room, game room, female impersonator shows Tues., Wed., Fri.-Sun.

ILLINOIS

Chicago (312)

Center Stage, 3730 N. Clark St. 60613. (935-2900) 8pm-4am Wed.-Sun. ('til 5am Sat.) L,nF, 80%mg, 15%fg, 5% s. Cabaret w/top-name entertainment, Victory Gardens legit theater, 4-color laser light projection, clothing shops. Free continental buffet 9pm Sun.

INDIANA

Indianapolis (317)

The Hunt & the Chase, 107 S. Penn 46204. (637-8797) 7pm-3am Mon.-Sat. L.F. 75%mg, 15%fg, 10% s. "Outstanding Midwest Disco"; '77 *Billboard* Disco Forum. "One of top 10 discos in the country"; *Cosmopolitan*. 3-storied bar, light show. No drugs.

IOWA

Cedar Rapids (319)

The Warehouse, 525 H St. S.W. 52904. (365-9044) 4pm-2am Mon.-Sat. L.S. 90%mg, 10%fg.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg (204)

Detour, 90 Albert St. (943-8005) 9pm-2am



Photo by Charlie Airwaves

L.A.'s **Bullshot** opened with the incomparable Grace Jones performing to a receptive audience.



The latest addition to Columbus' gay scene is the aptly named new disco, **Rudely Elegant**.

Wed.-Thurs., Sun., 10pm-4am Fri.-Sat. No alcohol, S. 45%mg, 35%fg, 20% s. Light show.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston (617)

The Bar, 252 Boylston St. 02167. (247-9308) Noon-2am daily. L, S. 90%mg, 10%fg. Cruise bar, game room. No drag.

Provincetown (617)

Dance 293, 293 Commercial St. 02657. 9pm-1am daily. L. 90%mg. Air conditioned, mirrored dance floor, light show.

MISSOURI

St. Louis (314)

Faces, 130 Collinsville Ave. East St. Louis 62201. (618-271-3233) 10pm-5am daily. L, no F. 90%mg, 5%fg, 5% s. Upstage Cabaret on upper floor w/live & drag shows, Mineshaft Levi/leather bar on lower level. Young crowd, "very cruisy."

Herbies, #1 Maryland Plaza 63108. (314-361-6200) 4:30pm-1am Mon.-Sat. L, F. 80%mg. Dining room open 5:30-9:30. Happy Hour 4:30. "Jewel of the West End in St. Louis": *GQ Magazine*.

NEW YORK

New York (212)

Better Days, 316 W. 49th St. 10019. (246-8976) 8pm-4am Wed.-Sun. L, F. 80%mg, 10%fg, 10% s. "Largest disco in midtown New York (Times Square area)," 1000-light show.

Harry's Back East, 1422 3rd Ave. 10028. (249-6991) 4pm-4am daily. L, nF. 95%mg. "A New York City gay 'institution' for 13 years. Completely remodeled and enlarged."

New York's **Crisco Disco** has gays guessing as to how it ever derived its unique name.

The Office, in L.A.'s San Fernando Valley, utilizes mirrors for a kaleidoscope effect.

TC Discotec, 114 W. 27th St. 10001. 9pm-dawn Fri.-Sat., 4pm-dawn Sun. L, F. 30%mg, 20%fg, 50% s. Neon "Lightning" lights, smoke machine, bubbles, etc.

OHIO

Cleveland (216)

Studio 65, 2265 Ontario 44115. 9pm-



Photo by Mario Ruiz



Clowns, circus acts, hot music, and an attractive staff draw them in to L.A.'s Circus Disco.

2:30am daily. (After Midnight Club upstairs 2:30am-6am Fri.-Sat.) L,F. 70%mg, 10%fg, 20% s. Tea dance 3pm Sun. Plexi-glass-walled dance floor, capacity 700 (After Midnight Club capacity 400). Membership required.

Traxx, 1273 W. 9th St. 44114 (241-1769) 8:30pm-2:30am daily. L,F. 60%mg, 10%fg, 30% s. Tea dance 3pm Sun. 4 bars, "funky" decor, gift shop, outdoor beer patio. "Rated among top 20 gay discos in U.S. Excellent sound & lighting."

Columbus (614)

Rudely Elegant, 1005 W. Broad St. 43222. (294-8309) 8pm-2:30am Wed.-Sat. L,S. 90%mg, 5%fg, 5% s. Live disco artists.

Dayton (513)

Studio I, 810 N. Main St. 45459. (228-9916) 9pm-2:30am daily. L. 80%mg, 10%fg, 10% s. Special events, light show, raised/mirrored dance floor. No drag.

Sandusky (419)

Keg Lounge, 1616 Cleveland Rd. 44870. (627-9582) 8pm-2:30am Mon.-Sat., 6pm-2:30am Sun. L,nF. 75%mg, 20%fg, 5% s. Special holiday parties, occasional shows. Cocktail hour 8pm-10pm, 2-for-1 drinks. 18 and over, ID required.

ONTARIO

Windsor (519)

Ritz Hotel, 88 Pitt St. East. (253-4678). Noon-1am Mon.-Sat. L,S. 75%mg, 20%fg, 5% s. "Windsor's only gay bar."

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia (215)

Allegro Bar, 1412 Spruce 19103. (545-2277) 10pm-2am Mon.-Sat. L,nF. 95%mg, 5%fg.

Letters, 2201 South St. 19146. (556-5099) 9pm-2am Wed.-Sun. L,S. 75%mg, 25%fg

(90% black crowd). Laser light show, 3-tier stage, 3 copper bars, suede/burlap decor. \$1 cover (no cover for Lambda Int'l members); all drinks \$1 Wed.

The Steps, 1526 Delancey St. 19102. (545-1526) 11pm-2am daily. L,nF. 90%mg, 5%fg, 5% s.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia (803)

The End Zone Club, 2706 N. Main St. 29201. (252-5477) 9pm-2am daily. L,nF. 70%mg, 20%fg, 10% s. Free draft Wed., ½-price cocktail hour Sun. Bare Chest Nights (free beer for guys without shirts).

TEXAS

Beaumont (713)

The Farmhouse, 304 Orleans St. 77701. (832-4206) 7pm-2am daily. L,nF. 60%mg, 30%fg, 10% s. \$.50 bar drinks Tues., 2-for-1 Wed., \$.35 bar drinks Thurs., beer bust 8pm-10pm Sun., drag show 9:30pm Sun.

Houston (713)

Cove Disco, 2912 So. Shepherd 77006. (524-0170) 8pm-2am Tues.-Sun. L,nF. 100%mg. No drag allowed through door. Drag shows Wed.-Thurs., Sun. 10:30pm. Must be 18, have ID w/photo.

Soixante-Quinze, 6015 Westheimer Rd. 77057. (783-7002) 6pm-2am Tues.-Sun. L,S. 75%mg, 15%fg, 10% s. Live entertainment Wed., movies 8pm Sun., 2



Studio 54 DJ Richie Kaczor (flowered shirt) sets the beat for New York's leading disco.

Photo by Mario Ruiz

(continued on 80)



Once upon a time, there was a very handsome, very rich young man who grew up to be a famous movie star. And did he live happily ever after? Read on, gang . . .



ROBERT WAGNER

by Jeremy Hughes

When you write about Bob Wagner, you write about two people: the incredibly handsome boy of the fifties whose beefcake pictures you clipped from fan mags and secreted in a bottom bureau drawer; and the still handsome middle-aged family man whose earnest attempts at establishing himself as a serious actor you have witnessed with varying degrees of approval over the past several years.

To deal, first, with the boy. Whether permed-and-dyed (*Beneath the 12-Mile Reef*, 1953), pageboy-bewigged (*Prince Valiant*, 1954), or his own sun-kissed auburn-haired self (tens of others, 1950-and still going strong), Robert John Wagner, Jr., thrust his silver-spooned persona upon the nation's cinematic consciousness at a time when celebrity was achieved at considerably more cost than one random film appearance or TV spot. For, beneath that vulnerably boyish charm was a ballsy guy whose single-minded ambition had long been fixed on the goal he was so stolidly to achieve: movie stardom.

Of course, he had a helluva lot going for him in addition to near-perfect face and physique. Born on Feb. 10, 1930, the only child of a wealthy and well-connected Detroit steel executive, Bob (or "R.J." to such intimates as twice-wife Natalie Wood) was relocated to Hollywood's heady atmosphere, as Hedda Hopper gossipped gushily in 1953, when a "Detroit steel man put his 8-year-old son on the train with a note pinned on his coat saying: 'This is Robert Wagner, deliver to Hollywood Military School, Hollywood, Cal.'"

As I interviewed him for IN TOUCH (after being carefully "checked-out" by his PR firm—"they tell me you're good," he reported), Bob good-naturedly modified Hedda's melodramatic story by adding, "...there was a woman here to meet me." Then the whole story emerged: "My mother and dad had come out from Michigan, and had decided to move here. So my father was building a house in Bel Air, where he'd bought some property, but it wasn't ready.

"But I had to start school—you know, Jerry, it was one of those things where the semester started and my folks were still packing and all that. What happened was that he sent me on ahead, and this woman, this marvelous woman, met me at the train and took me over to this military school, and sort of watched over me on the weekends and things like that. And then my mother and father came out later that year."

This rather pedestrian exposition is set forth here only because of the way it innocently reveals, in Bob's own matter-of-fact recital, the cushiony circumstances surrounding his early conditioning: of course one's father would buy and build in exclusive Bel Air; of course one would go to a private military school; of course there would always be someone to "watch over" one—all these singular facts related to naturally, even ingenuously.

The litany of privilege surfaces with inadvertent regularity in his conversation. It is implicit in the admission that, "I was expelled from every good prep school in L.A.;" in his affinity for golf, hunting, yachting, and soccer; and, most particu-

larly, in his somewhat lengthy but fascinating remembrance of how he got started in "the business."

"I'd always wanted to be in pictures," he told me, "and had spent all my time instead of going to school going to matinees, sitting in the theater. And I used to do all these impersonations. You see, I'd caddied for Clark Gable. I followed Gable around the golf course and saw Randy Scott and Fred Astaire, and all of these stars who were at the Bel Air Country Club." (Sidney Skolsky was to record in the late fifties that Wagner "manages to associate with successful people, usually at the height of their success," also noting that "until he entered the movies, his only acting experience was in a school production, 'The Courtship of Miles Standish,' in which he played Priscilla.")

"So my first chance at pictures came when a friend told Solly Bianco, the big casting director at Warners, 'I've got this kid, he's a friend of my daughter's, and he's crazy about going into pictures,' and all that. So I went to Warner Bros., and they said, 'why should you be in pictures?' and I said, 'I can do Cary Grant and Jimmy Cagney and Jimmy Stewart and all these impersonations' and they said, 'oh, that's terrific, but we already got Jimmy Stewart and Cary Grant and Clark Gable and everybody else. Why don't you do a little bit of you?' And I got so scared I ran out of the office. So that's the first time. And then I went back to high school. I promised my folks that I'd finish high school."

High school was Saint Monica's (not the plebian Santa Monica High School,

he pointedly clarifies), where he was graduated in 1948, President, needless to say, of the Senior Class. "At that time my father was encouraging me to go into his business, the steel business. And all I wanted to do was to be an actor."

"Then my father, who knew Bill Grady, the casting director at Metro, and knew Clark Gable, and knew Bill Wellman, and knew all these different people, was sitting with Bill Wellman at lunch one day and he said, 'my kid's crazy to get into pictures' and Bill said, 'well, I think he'd be terrific and I'll put him in my picture.' So I got into Bill Wellman's picture called *The Happy Years* (1950). You have to look very carefully to see me. I'm in one close shot with Leo G. Carroll, and in another one I play a baseball catcher with a mask over my face behind Dean Stockwell. I had to do that because I was bigger than all the rest of the kids, y'know?"

"Anyway, I got that part, and then Bill Wellman tried to get me lined up at Metro, where the schools were all filled up with those aspiring actors—you know what I'm talking about, Jerry. They had all these young contract players. So Bill took me over and we went to see Billy Grady, who I'd known from the golf course, and Billy said, 'if you really want to get into the business, you ought to go to New York, because to start here is really going to be terribly difficult, da-da, da-da, da.' And Gable tried to give me a break in one of his pictures, but I needed to get a job first, to get a SAG card."

"So then I started working as an extra, and I thought that if I could get up in front of the camera, that somebody would see me and say, 'who is that terrific kid?'—you know, the Lana Turner story. I thought I could go that route. I never realized that if you're an extra, and 'established' on screen for that day, you're out! So I had a lot of one-day jobs." (Writer's note: Wagner appeared as an extra in some 40 to 50 films.)

"And then I got over to Fox—how the hell can I explain to you how this happened? I had an agent called Halliburton and Weintraub, and they took me out there and I did a reading, and I was signed to a 90-day test option to a 7-year contract. But between that time I went and tested for a picture called *Theresa*, which Fred Zinnemann directed, and there was a lot of publicity about this because they were going all over the country trying to find some kid to play this part. It was Pier Angeli's first picture. And I tested with the man who wrote it—Stewart Stern—and Fred Zinnemann directed the test and it was the first time I ever said anything on the screen, and I didn't know what the hell I was doing. I was just talkin'."

"And Edwin Schallert, who was then the big critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, went to see these tests, of which there were about ten. And he wrote that I was

the dark horse to get this role (I'd never had my name in the paper on a theatrical basis before!). But Fox read it and said, 'what the hell are you doing over there when you're under contract to us?' And I said, 'well, I had a chance to test for this part,' and they said, 'well, you're under a test option contract here,' and Helena Sorrell, who was the drama coach at Fox, tested me, and they saw the test, and they signed me. And two weeks later I was in a film called *Halls of Montezuma*. And that started it all rollin'."

(Also then under contract to Fox was a precocious ten-year-old star, one Natalie Wood. "I was walking down a studio hallway with my mother one day," the diminutive (5'3½") Miss Wood recalled recently, "when I saw Robert Wagner walking toward me. He was all of eighteen, and at that moment not only unobtainable, but greater than Zorro. I turned to my mother and whispered, 'When I grow up, I'm going to marry him.' " More, much more, of this, below.)

The release of *Halls of Montezuma*, in 1950, marked the early stages of a career doing, in the words of Abe Greenberg, "callow youth roles which often made him appear like the scion of a wealthy social family playing at films." Looking back, even Bob characterizes his then-self as "the pretty boy with a beach ball in one hand and a tennis racquet in the other."

A watershed film, in more ways than one, was *With a Song in My Heart* (1952). "When that came along," he reminisces, blue eyes focused on the past, left hand massaging a blue-jeaned leg, "Zanuck said to me, 'this picture will do more for you than any other picture you'll do in your career.' And I said, 'why is that?' And he said, 'because the people will come out of the theater and say, 'Who was that guy?' " And I was on the screen for a minute and a half or two minutes, something like that.

"I didn't do anything! I mean, Walter Lang, the director, told me what to do, and how to act, and how to look at Susan Hayward, and it all was cut by a wonderful cutter called Watson Webb, and it won the Photoplay Gold Medal, it won the Box Office Blue Ribbon Award, and I think Susan was even *nominated*"—a hint of wistfulness here from the never-nominated actor—"I mean the picture was a tremendous box office success, in which I had just a little part, but what happened was that I began to get five thousand letters a week and became a bobby sox idol, and the whole thing kicked off!"

In rapid succession came *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and *Titanic*, both with acerbic Clifton Webb, *Beneath the 12-Mile Reef* as a Greek fisherboy (occasion of the dye job and permanent), and *Prince Valiant*, physically perfect as Hal Foster's idealized comic strip hero, but lacking the technical panache that

would have made it all work. Of course, that pageboy hairdo didn't help alleviate his self-consciousness, but he now views the discomfort, anecdotally, in more mature perspective: It seems Dean Martin just happened in upon him in his leotards and "haircut"—"I think he talked to me for ten minutes before he realized I wasn't Jane Wyman," Bob chuckles.

Throughout the fifties, at the rate of about two films a year, he played a variety of roles: cowboy (*Broken Lance*, 1954); psychopathic killer (*A Kiss Before Dying*, 1956); thoughtless southern boy (*Between Heaven and Hell*, 1957, with perhaps the silver screen's first explicit reference to diarrhea with Wagner's line, "I've got the runs"); spy (*Stopover Tokyo*, 1957); braggart jet pilot (*The Hunter*, 1958); Irish kid from the wrong side of the tracks (*In Love and War*, 1958); and trumpeter—for which he learned to play the instrument—opposite then-wife Natalie Wood (*All the Fine Young Cannibals*, 1960). (Gay fans will remember that Bob bared his increasingly hirsute chest with gratifying frequency during these years, appearing sans shirt in at least every other flick.)

Bob and Natalie became Hollywood's golden couple when they were married on Dec. 28, 1957 (after, Miss Wood later confessed to Earl Wilson, a full year of living together). Bob had just completed *The Mountain* with the redoubtable Spencer Tracy, and through that experience found new dedication to his profession. "You owe it to yourself to give the work everything you've got," Tracy lectured, "or you ought to find something else to do." Only then, in the words of Marshall Berges, did Wagner "buckle down to his craft." And, accordingly, our focus now changes, from boy to man.

For Bob Wagner was in his late twenties, a bit long in the tooth for pre-teen fans who set their sights on younger prey. The next eight years were a transitional period, marked more by lows than highs. His Fox contract ran out in June of 1961, and so did Natalie (on the 21st, to be exact): "The last year of our marriage," she told the judge, "Mr. Wagner preferred to be off by himself."

Bob went off by himself to Europe, and, three months after the divorce became final (April 28, 1963), married (July 21) former actress Marion "Marshall" Tanner Davey (from marriage to Alan A.) Donen (ditto producer Stanley), one year his senior—she was 34—and they settled "permanently" in Palm Springs. Natalie eventually married theatrical agent Richard Gregson. Both were to become parents for the first time with their second spouses—and both had daughters.

In October of 1963, Bob made his television debut, guesting in the "And Man

(continued on 96)

INTRODUCING PETE HOLLISTER



PHOTOGRAPHY BY KURT NORCROSS



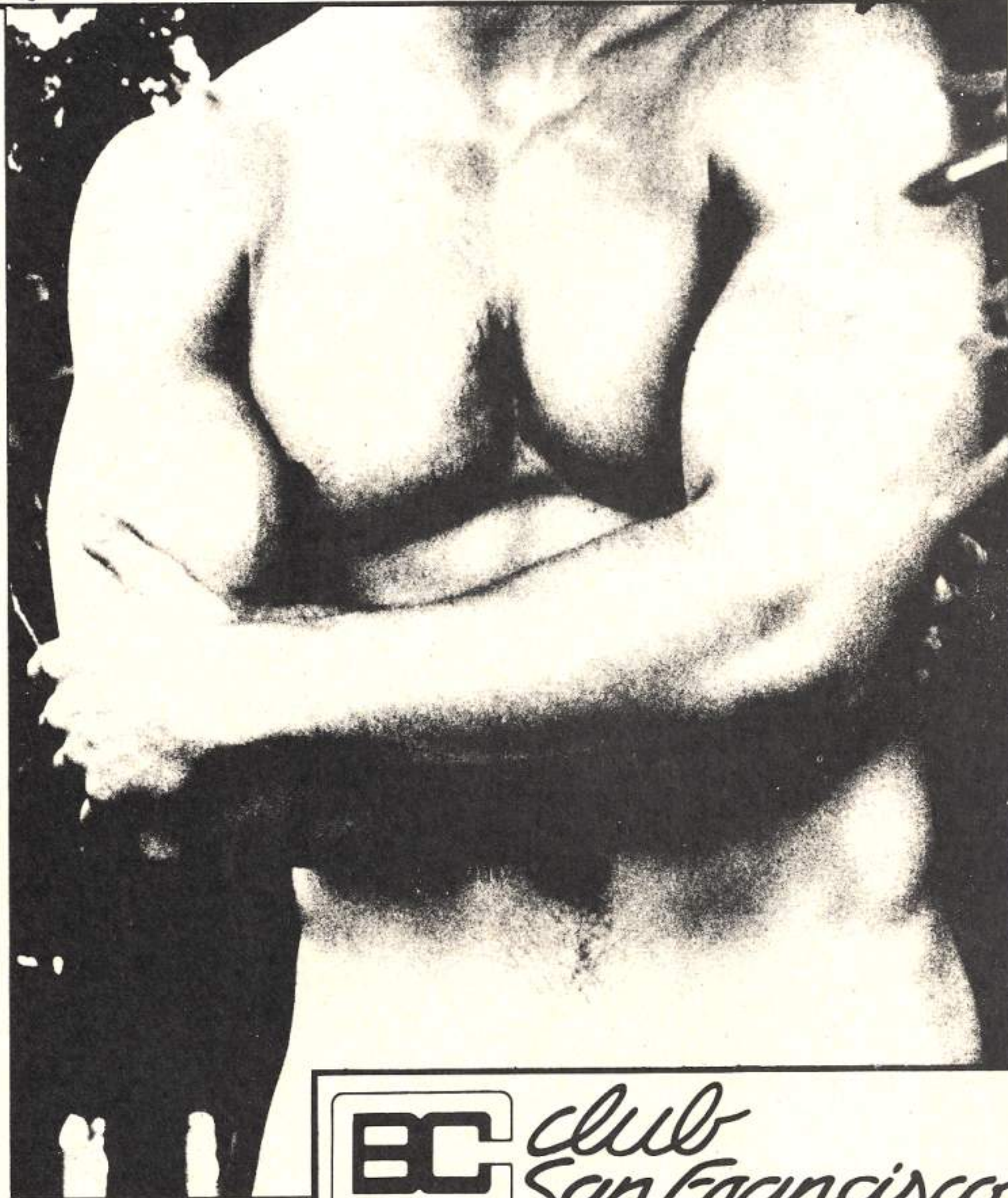
If you think you've seen Pete Hollister somewhere before, you're probably right—the 28-year-old Aries is making quite a name for himself as a model. (With a face and body like that, how could he be anything else?) Pete enjoys sports ("I'm one of the few American soccer nuts around," he says with a grin) and quiet socializing. "I wish to hell I had time to settle down," Pete says, "but trying to juggle a career and any kind of long-term relationship just now isn't practical." He pauses for a reflexive sigh. "Some day, though. . . ."







The one and only



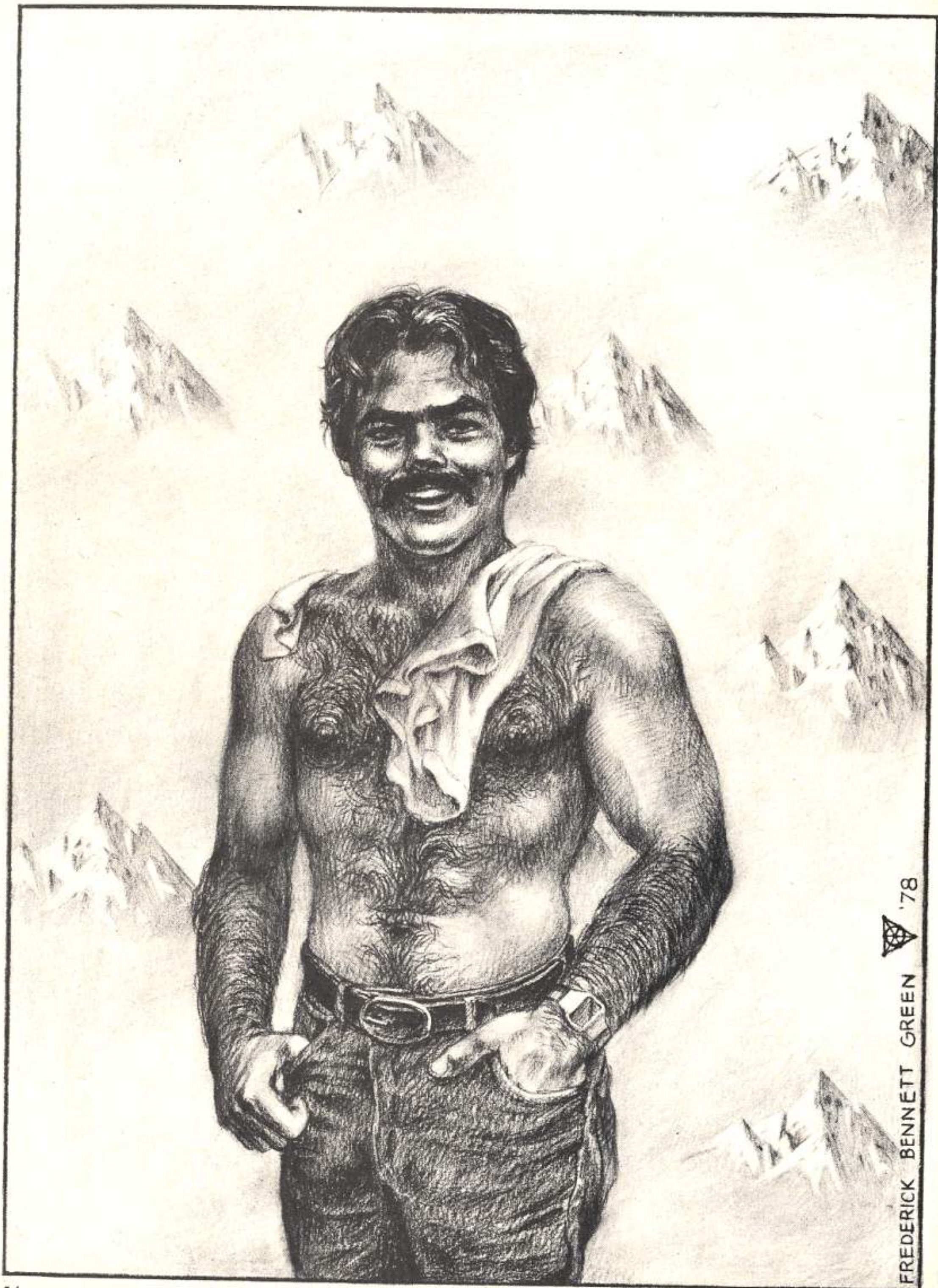
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FREDERICK BENNETT GREEN '78

felix

fiction by george m. seaton

illustration by frederick green

Felix is gay and Cuban and can cry and laugh and become furious and love and hate in sequence in a span of less than twenty minutes without blinking an eyelid . . . except when he cries, and he does sometimes. He cried once because people really don't love one another like they should—or like he thought they should. He was drunk then, and high, and didn't care if those who didn't know about him suspected something—suspected that he was a little strange, a little “queer” perhaps, or a downright *faggot*. And, he sobbed on the porch of an old house in Denver where a mixed crowd of young people had come to party in the summer, in the cool evening air of that city on the high plains at the base of the Colorado Rockies.

He pleaded with a bespectacled, short-haired Physical Education Major from the University of Denver to accept the love that was around her and to return it. He even told her that men should love men and women should love women emotionally, spiritually, physically, and she studied him carefully for a moment and then went back into the old house without saying a word.

Felix and I didn't stay long at the party because there were so many there who wouldn't have understood if they had known about us and that we did, in fact, love other men and that that love was real and good and sexual and fulfilling. And, Felix was on the drunken verge of announcing his and my gayness to everyone—to those assembled at the party, the good people of the City of Denver, the world, the universe. He had already told his parents—his Cuban parents—about himself and explaining it to the universe after that confrontation with Mama y Padre in heated, emotional, loud, thousand-mile-an-hour Spanish would have been easy . . . no problem at all. But, I had decided that those at the party just wouldn't have understood because . . . well . . . they just weren't ready for Felix's confession, so I grabbed his thick, hairy arm and led him away from the old house.

“Where we going?” he asked, pulling away from my grasp and thrusting his hands into the pockets of his Levi's, stumbling slightly on the old, uneven sidewalk.

“Where do you want to go?” I replied, watching the black, short-cropped hair, the thick neck, the broad shoulders and back which were covered with his favorite red-and-black check-board shirt.

“I don't know.”

“Where? The park? A bar? Where?”

“Christ, I don't know . . . where I'm at, much less where I want to go. I don't know. I don't care.”

I unlocked the passenger side of my car and held the door open for him. He slipped onto the seat, keeping his hands in his pockets. I shut the door and started to walk around the car to the driver's side when he yelled out his window: “Hey, how in hell do you talk to people and explain to them what's in your soul?”

I stopped and considered his question for an instant and decided that any answer I could give him would be inadequate after his use of the word “soul.” Our discussions together were usually of the competitive nature anyway and, no, I just

didn't feel up to the competition if the soul was going to be involved. So, I continued to walk around the car and then opened my door which Felix had unlocked by sprawling across the front seat, lying flat on his back and raising his arm over his head to pull the lock up. His head rested directly below the steering wheel.

“How do you explain to them?” he said, staring up at me.

I put my hands under his head and lifted it high enough for me to slip in under it. I then let it rest on my thigh.

“Well, I suppose you don't explain it to them. You can try, but I doubt if they will ever understand.”

I started the car and pulled away from the curb.

“But, they've got to know. Christ, someone has got to explain to them about love and about the love of man for man and woman for woman which is . . . so fucking beautiful.”

“Why do they have to know? They can live their entire lives as they wish and go to college and have good jobs and get married and raise kids and on and on and what would it ever matter to them if they really understood about gay love?”

“It's just necessary, that's all.”

Felix was silent for a moment. Then he laughed and crossed his arms over his chest and brought one leg off the floor and stuck it out the window.

“Hey,” he said, “did you see that boy in the white pants . . . in the painter's pants? Jesus, what a fine ass.”

And he told me about the boy's ass and other asses he had admired and he would periodically lapse back into his concern about how he was going to tell “those people” about the “fucking beautiful love” of man for man and woman for woman.

I drove toward Cheesman Park, which is not far from the Colorado State Capitol Building with its gold-plated dome and circular drive, where night-time male hustlers ply their trade from the granite steps of the building or lean against lamp posts while a constant parade of automobiles circumnavigate the drive . . . slowly.

As I pulled off Fourteenth Avenue and into the park I told Felix to sit up lest the Park Police notice something “queer” about us. He pulled his leg into the car, sat up and looked out the windshield at the white, marble-pillared, canopy-type monument which sits illuminated upon a small rise at the eastern edge of the park.

“I am grateful,” he said, “to Walter S. Cheesman and his dear widow because without them there would be no Cheesman Park and all the faggots in this stinking city would have to hang-out at the playground and molest little children . . . and . . . and . . .”

And, then he was silent for a moment as he watched a young man in cutoffs and a white T-shirt cross the street in front of us.

“And,” he continued, “did you see that?”

“Sure.”

“Whadaya' mean *sure*?”

“I said *sure*. Yes, it was right in front of me. Of course I saw it.”

He chuckled softly and shook his head. “That's what I like about you—you're so fucking excitable. You're so . . . emo-

tional. See, here this beautiful Adonis steps out of the night and walks right in front of you . . . and his shorts are so short that his dong is hanging out and they're so tight that his ass is right there—you don't even need an imagination—and you say 'sure, I saw it.' Holy Christ, you are some kind of excitable dude."

"I'm a Libra."

"Hell, you're a bore . . . sometimes."

"Thanks."

"My pleasure."

I backed into a space in a parking lot near the monument. We sat watching the cars and the people in the cars pass through the lot. Several young men could be seen walking around the monument or going into or coming out of the restroom behind it.

"If I die," Felix said as he took a joint from his shirt pocket and delicately placed the tip of it between his lips, "bury me in that flower bed by the head."

"Yes, that would seem appropriate."

"Not only appropriate, my dear, but ecstatically so."

He breathed the pungent smoke into himself, deep into his lungs and held it in as he passed the joint to me.

I've never really enjoyed smoking grass because it irritates my sinuses and gives me headaches, which are probably reactions not due to the weed at all but to some neurosis which my mother unwittingly(?) instilled in me during my childhood. I believe it involves her religious fervor and my rejection of it. Be that as it may, I placed my lips on the little, white devil and inflated my lungs with its smoke.

I passed the joint back to Felix. He took it between his thumb and index finger and, once again, sucked hard on the tip.

"Someday my parents will understand me," he said, holding the smoke in his lungs and talking as if he were in mortal pain. He blew the smoke out and flicked the ashes out the window.

"Why should they do that? You don't understand yourself."

"Oh, but I do. See, I'm gay and I love it. I mean . . . see . . . I just love my life, is all. Sure, sometimes I get depressed—like tonight at the party—and feel so helpless, but I do understand myself."

"I don't."

"Understand me?"

"No, I don't understand myself."

"Oh . . . well . . . see, you had your parents all your life to fuck you up. Castro wouldn't let my parents out of Cuba, so I didn't have that problem. See, I've got some hangups but, Jesus, I'd probably be crazy as hell if I would've had to live with my parents when I was a kid."

"You really think they will accept you someday as you are . . . without trying to change you?"

"No. They will just understand me someday. They'll never accept the fact that their kid is a faggot. But, they will understand me. They have to. They have to know what's in my soul. They have to know. . . ."

And, then he let his head rest on top of the back of the seat. I looked at his face and saw that he was crying again.

"Shit," he said, "somehow I've got to let them know. I've got to let them all know what's in my soul."

I reached over and grabbed the joint which Felix was allowing to burn away between his fingers. I took another hit and tried to concentrate on saying something meaningful to him about the soul and parents and explaining unexplainable things to people who really don't want to listen. But, the only thing which came out of my mouth was smoke and one short, violent episode of coughing (thanks, Mom). My mind was telling me that everything was relatively cool with the world and that all things at that moment in time were fairly equal and Felix's problem was just another of *those things* which would straighten itself out in the morning.

"God, am I fucked up," he said.

"Yeah, really. You want to go for a walk?"

"Nah . . . yeah . . . okay."

We both got out of the car and walked across the parking lot toward the monument. Felix pulled his red-and-black checkerboard shirt off and draped it over his shoulder.

"Basically, it's indecent exposure," I said.

"There is nothing, absolutely nothing, indecent about a man's body. 'Count rather those fabulous possessions,' " he said, quoting Stephen Spender, " 'which begin with your body and your fiery soul; the hairs on your head and the muscles extending in ranges with lakes across your limbs . . . ' "

"Yes . . . yes . . . and we are left with another one of your cateforical . . . excuse me . . . categorical statements which will be remembered for all time, in all places where people gather together to . . ."

"Bullshit," he interrupted.

"What?"

"You . . . you're full of it."

"Hmmm. . . ."

We walked up the small rise upon which the monument sits. Felix climbed the three marble steps to the floor of the structure and walked to the middle of it. He tied his shirt around his waist and then began to move around the floor in some facsimile of a ballet step. I leaned against a pillar and watched him move.

"Swan Lake?" I asked.

"No," he said, swirling his body around with his arms raised above his head, "it's the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies."

"I should have known."

Felix continued to dance for a while and then he stopped and stood still for a moment, looking at me.

"Hey," he said, "I want to show you something."

He grabbed my arm and led me down the rise to a clump of bushes surrounding several cement steps near a flowerbed.

"Look down . . . right there . . . at the first step," he said.

I looked down at the step and could see that someone had inscribed in the cement—before it had hardened—the words "God Save the Queens."

"Well," I said, "how about that."

"Whadaya' mean *how about that*? Jesus, I just don't understand you sometimes. Do you recognize the implications of that statement in concrete, right here in old red-neck country, right here in old Denver Coloradee?"

"No, I . . ."

And Felix interrupted me with explanation about the inscription representing the agonizingly futile attempt of effeminate gay men to make some contribution to society and to be accepted as useful people and not as freaks. "And their only outlet," he said as his voice cracked, "is to sneak into the bushes at night and scratch in wet cement with an old stick."

We stood silently looking at the inscription for a moment. Felix was crying again.

"C'mon, I'll take you home," I said.

Felix untied his shirt from around his waist and put it back on.

I went to bed that night thinking about Felix and the inevitability that we would end up again and again in Cheesman Park because that is where most gay men and lesbians end up in the night, in those sweet summer nights in Denver. It is a spiritual attachment of sorts; a place where the implications of clandestine-made inscriptions in wet cement can be read and wept over; where the mock ballet of a Cuban "fairy" can be performed and accepted for what it is—an expression of what's in one's soul.

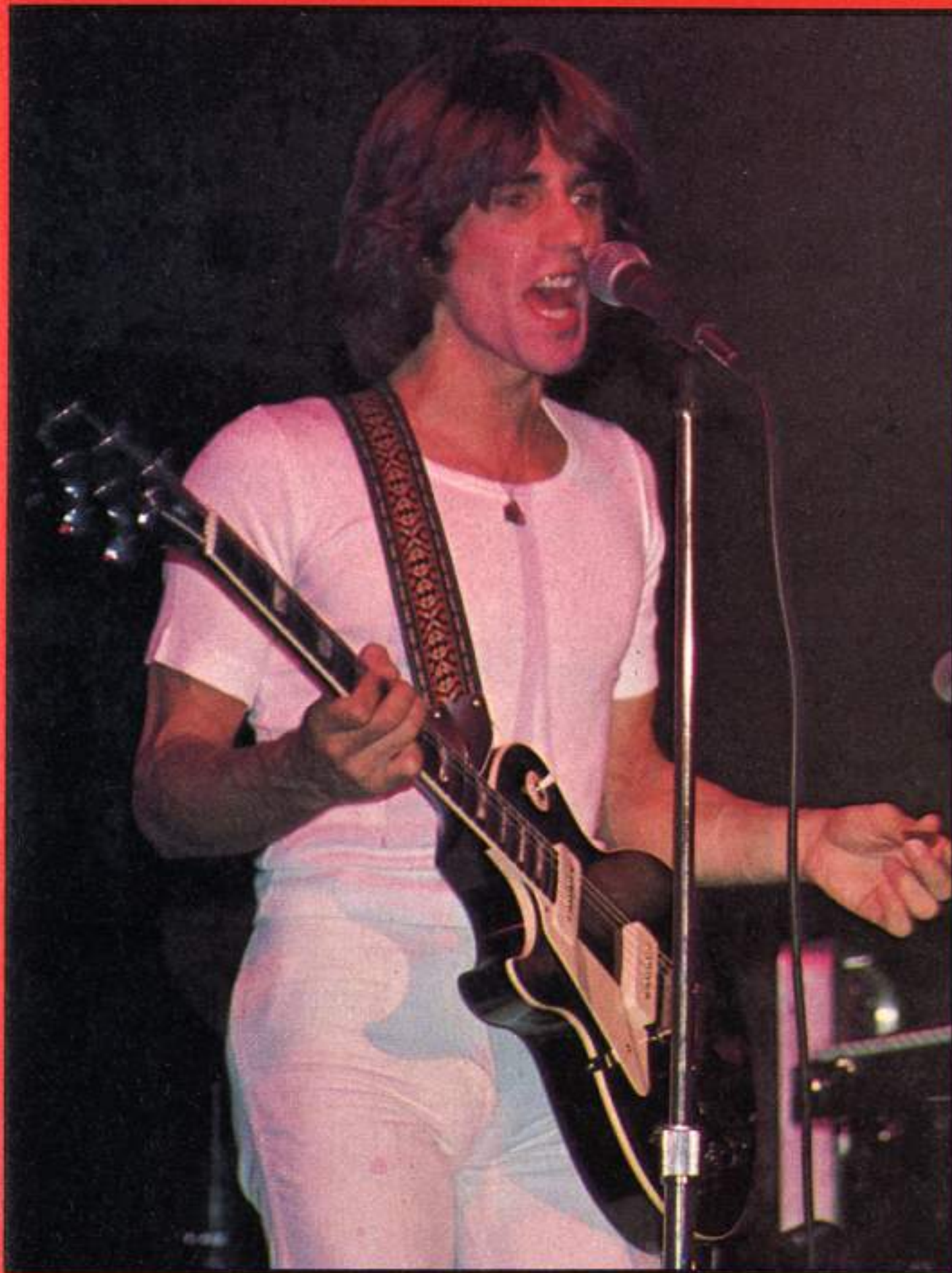
That Felix would have a nervous breakdown the following summer was something which could have been predicted. What was in his soul consumed his mind . . . like an engine without a governor—something you can't turn off until it burns itself out.

I received a letter from him the other day. He said he was fine and the breakdown had helped. I wrote back that he should come on out to Hollywood where breakdowns are a way of life; where ballet is appreciated.

PULSE

by Charles Herschberg

photos by John Cox



ALESSI

Alessi—the word ripples sweetly from an increasing number of lips as Alessi-melodies float softly into more and more ears. Romantic singers are gone, some say, but don't believe it. You just have to listen harder to find them. Billy and Bobby Alessi are *Alessi*. Brought to you by A&M Records, they are the newest musical duo to press against the perimeter of romantic fame. Just when it seemed that romance was out, Alessi is in, emerging from the jukebox like a double-vision dream because Billy and Bobby are identical twins.

When IN TOUCH spoke with Alessi, the boys had just done a *Rock & Roll Sports Classic* for NBC, racing on land and in water with the likes of Rod Stewart, The Jackson Five, Sha Na Na and even Phyllis Diller. The day before the taping, NBC sent each Alessi the bulk of his costume; predictably, a nylon bathing suit. "I told our manager I didn't know how to swim," explained Billy, who'd been entered in the freestyle dash. "That doesn't matter," manager Steve Borkum shrugged. Borkum knows that dreamers want their romantic fantasies in harmony and in bathing suits.

Billy and Bobby want to write songs and sing them, and much of their audience is content with that. But Alessi albums come wrapped in covers displaying the looks that have provoked riotous rites of super-adulation. *Sweet Enough To Eat!* was the banner above their picture in a London paper as Alessimania broke out like Saturday night fever among passion-bitten swarms when the American twosome toured Britain.

"They went completely crazy with enthusiasm," Billy says. "One guy killed himself because he just got so drunk he drowned in a fountain where everyone was swimming in their underwear."

Frolicking fans wanted the twins to bare as much flesh in response. Alessi-crazed girls—and boys—ripped at the singers' matching outfits until only shreds hung from the trembling bodies of teendom's latest idols. That's romance!

Back in the States, *16* magazine, long-time Bible of the bubble gum brigade, ran a *Win A Double Date With Alessi* contest. When he read about it, Billy whispered to an A&M exec, "Try and fix it so they all lose."

Billy's whisper represents one of the only times the Alessi camp gave way to the pressures of their fame. Hours before their concert at the New Victoria Theater in London, the brothers were informed that the rock hall had been shut down by liquidators. Three thousand tickets had been sold for the performance, but cash from the boxoffice was in the hands of the liquidators. "The show will go on, even if it means playing on the pavement outside," the twins declared. They agreed to play for nothing, and put up the money to reconnect the electricity and pay staff expenses.

They also get first names right when speaking to their public and the press: they happily autograph 8x10 glossies in batches of 500; and they cooperate wholeheartedly with the mechanism of their promotion.

"Make It Last" is their musical plea to the giant machine which helps determine whether a team will be Simon and Garfunkel or die unwept, unhonored and unsung in \$1.98 bargain bins. "We've been tryin' for a long time... don't take it away," they wall on the grooves. Professionally, they now have "it"—headlining clubs like New York's *Bottom Line* and television shows like *Midnight Special* and *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert*. A&M may next send B&B to Japan where *All For A Reason*, the current Alessi LP, began chart-leaping after a single week's release.

Billy and Bobby grew up on Long Island, New York. Hoping the twins would become sportsmen, their athletically-inclined father built a well-equipped gymnasium in their basement, but as their personalities developed, the boys converted the gym into a rehearsal studio.

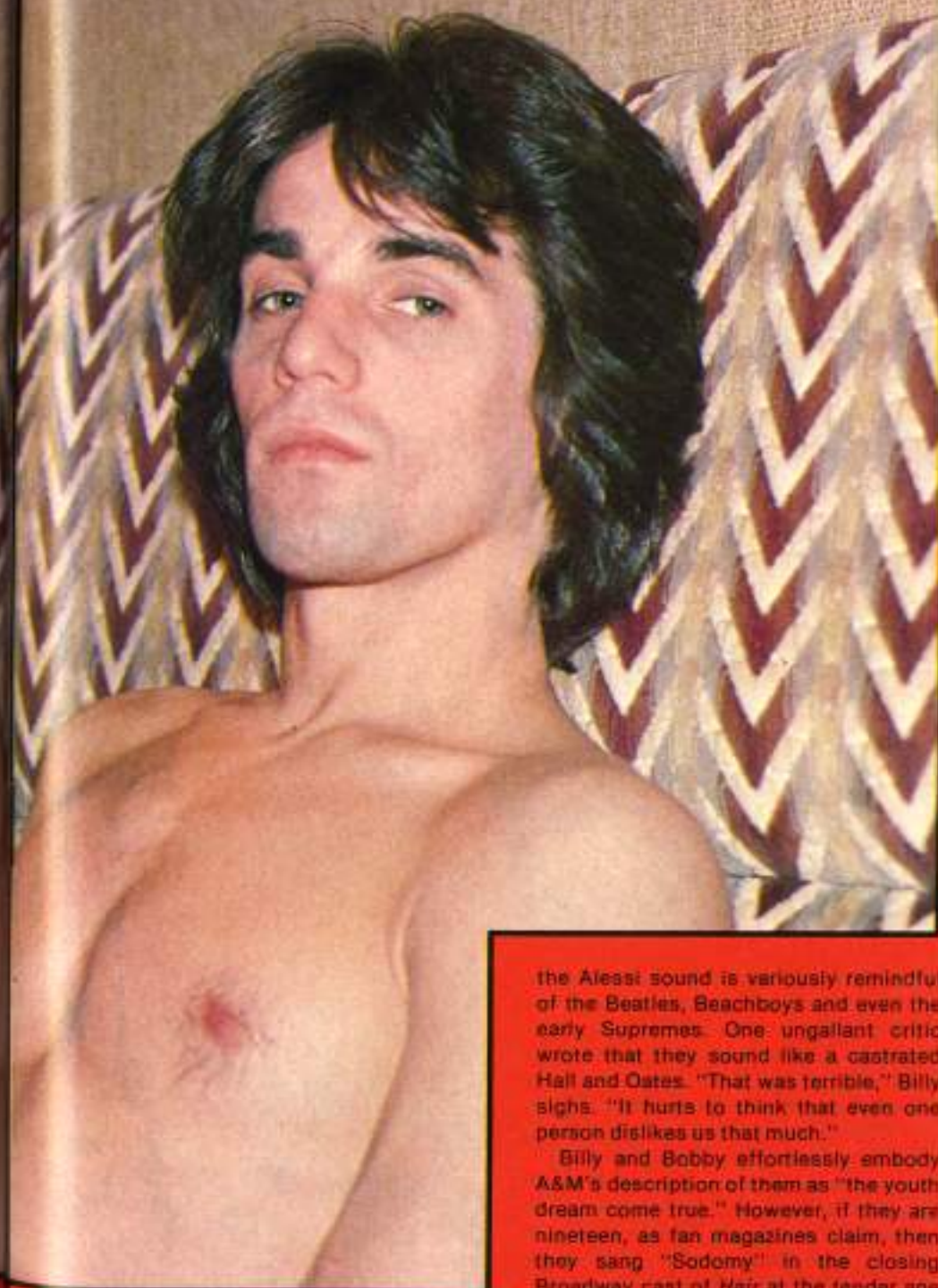
Before their sex-appeal smiles and sunilk-soft hair helped sell the music, their music helped sell toothpaste and shampoo... and Big Macs, Pepsi Cola, Fords and Chevis. Apprenticing with commercial-maker David Lucas (producer of *All For A Reason*) they learned to write the kind of light-melodied, simple-lyriced tune you suddenly find yourself humming after you've heard it twice. They learned to work out harmony parts and record sure-shot jingles to the second. "We still get residuals off those commercials," Bobby says; from his praises of Contac's tiny time capsules to Billy's for (he sings it for me) "S-I-N-E Q-F-F."



Expanding on the jingles, they channel their experiences and musical sensibilities through the best contemporary musical influences, crediting the Beatles as inspiration for many of their co-compositions. They add, "We write a lot of love songs, being Italians."

Their music has been recorded by Richie Havens, Frankie Valli and Olivia Newton-John, but the Alessis themselves provide the perfect voices for the distinctive pop-rock melodies. Air-cushioned in soft falsetto harmonies,

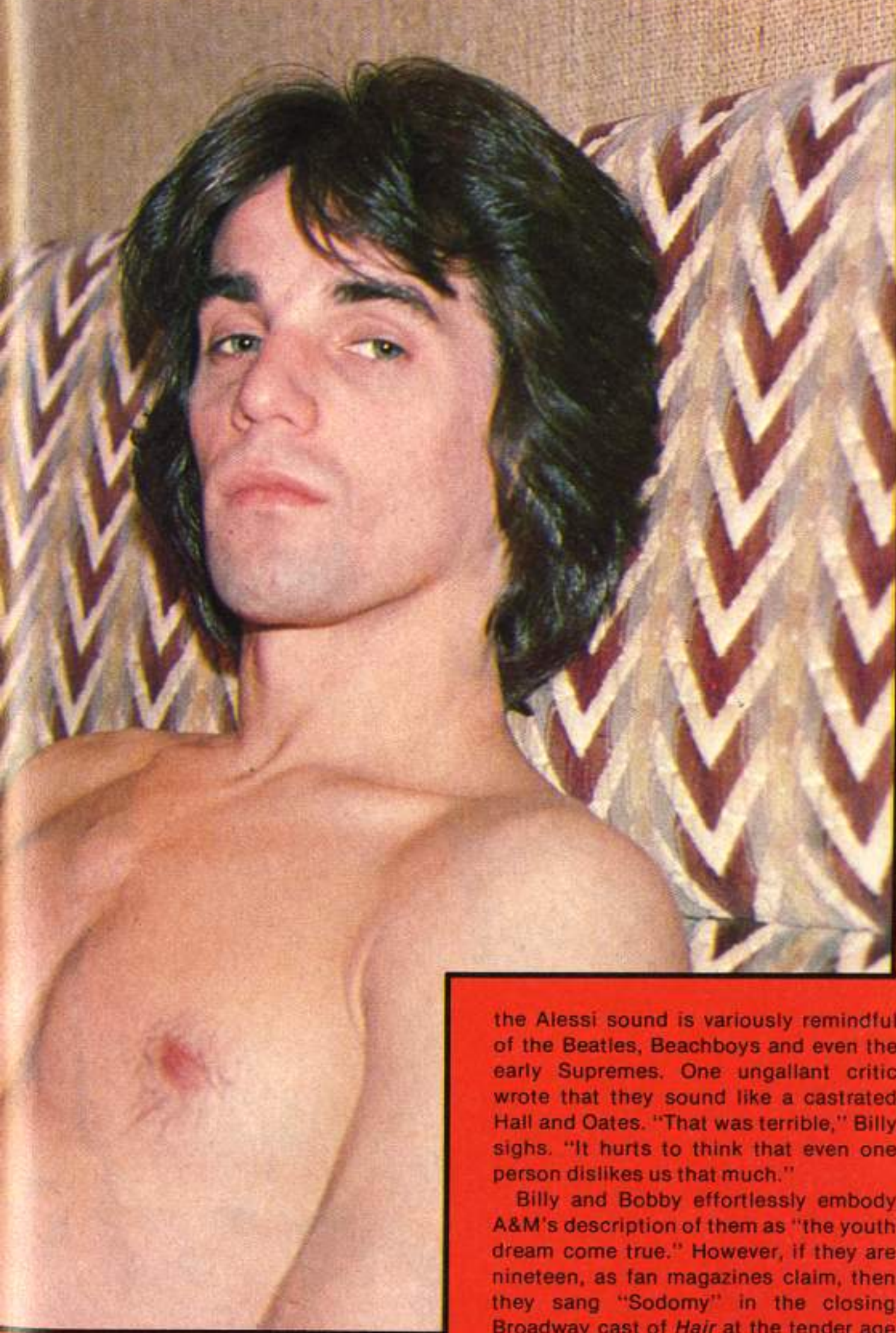
Teen idols and identical twins, the Alessi brothers are doing their best to double the fun for record buyers the world over.



the Alessi sound is variously remindful of the Beatles, Beachboys and even the early Supremes. One ungallant critic wrote that they sound like a castrated Hall and Oates. "That was terrible," Billy sighs. "It hurts to think that even one person dislikes us that much."

Billy and Bobby effortlessly embody A&M's description of them as "the youth dream come true." However, if they are nineteen, as fan magazines claim, then they sang "Sodomy" in the closing Broadway cast of *Hair* at the tender age

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of eleven. Brooke Shields, move over. In 1970, the brothers took turns playing Woof, the character with a thing for Mick Jagger.

After *Hair*, the Alessis backed up Ms. Minnelli on television's *Liza With a Z*, and then moved into *Dude*, a 1972 rock musical by Gerome Ragni and Galt MacDermot, two of *Hair*'s originators. Bobby was Esso and Billy played Extra among a cast of characters named Texaco, Hero, Halo, Echo, Solo, Nero and Zero. *Dude* closed after sixteen performances.

Billy and Bobby next earned something of a cult following as half of the Long Island rock foursome called Barnaby Bye. Ahmet Ertegun of Atlantic Records attended Barnaby Bye's debut gig and signed the group. They recorded two albums for Atlantic, but air play didn't extend very far beyond Long Island. As Barnaby Bye's heavy metal leanings grew heavier and songs like "White Tornado" (about a condom) became representative of their subject matter, the Alessis took leave, striking out on their own.

It was all for a reason, as their now-success and current album affirm. They've re-recorded the title cut of *All For A Reason* for a funkier, more aggressive single. Still, it's love, love, love. Their only hate song is "Hate To Be In Love."

The longest cut on the album (clocking in at 9:02) is "Here Again" which promises that when it's all over, it's not really over. "We'll see you in your next life," they sing in an ethereal harmony of *Strawberry Fields* and *The Twilight Zone*, accepting the possibility that spirit survives beyond body. "We have a grandfather who's 89. He tells us, 'My head is still together. I just want to get into another body.'"

In the studio working on their third album for A&M, the only problem for Billy and Bobby Alessi seems to be that their new producer, guitarman Louis Sheldon, still can't tell these Doublemint twins apart. How do people differentiate? "Billy plays piano and I play guitar," Bobby says with a giggle. Also, Bobby prefers the traditional, like his classic 1955 T-Bird, while Billy favors modern, like his monster Cadillac Seville.

Maybe that's because Bobby was born five minutes earlier.

SCENE

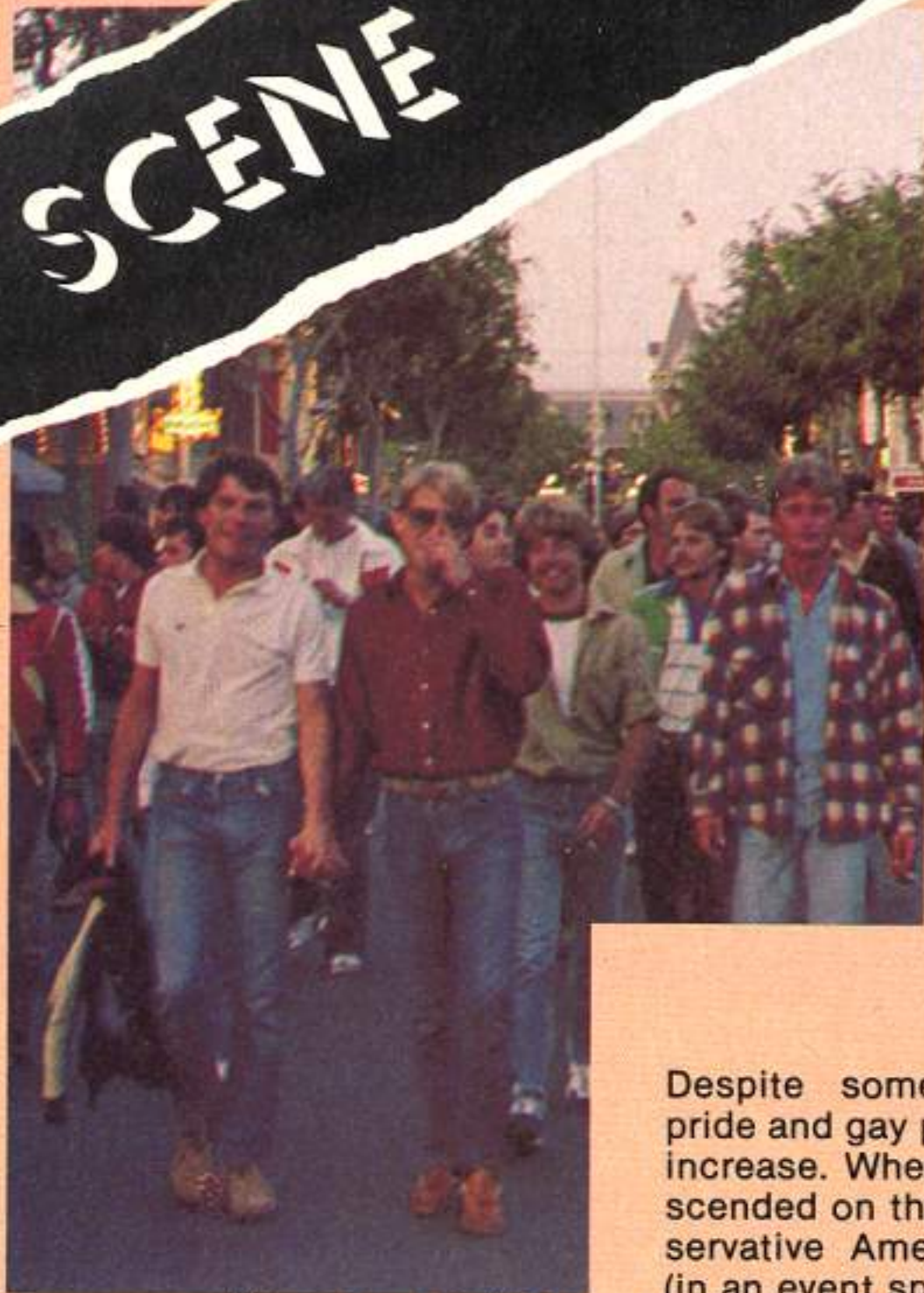


Photo courtesy of **Studio One**

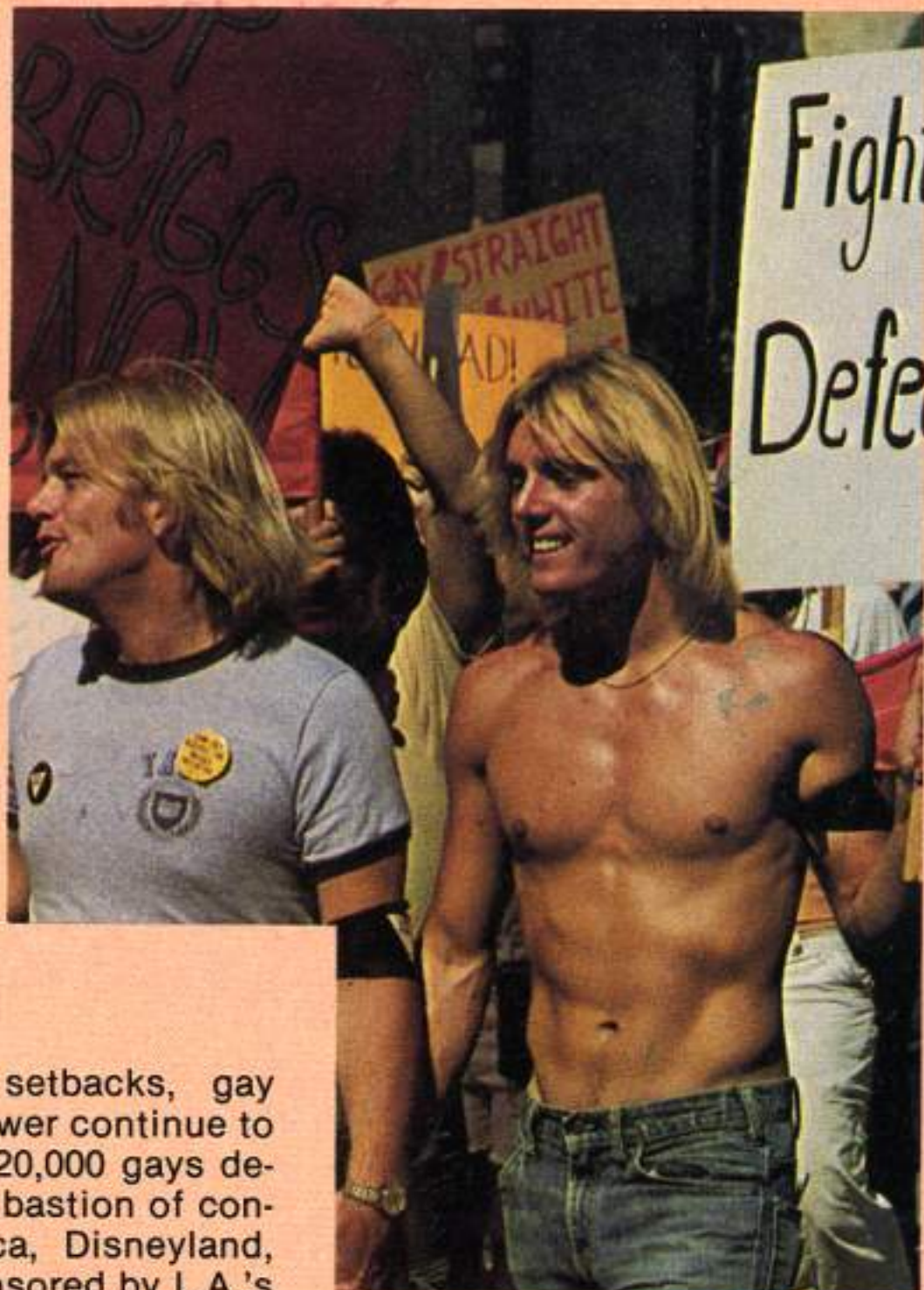


Photo by Ron Felsing

Despite some setbacks, gay pride and gay power continue to increase. When 20,000 gays descended on that bastion of conservative America, Disneyland, (in an event sponsored by L.A.'s Studio One and the Tavern Guild), you could almost feel the sense of belonging—of *being*. That feeling was also evident in Gay Pride marches around the world—these of L.A.'s comparatively small parade/rally.

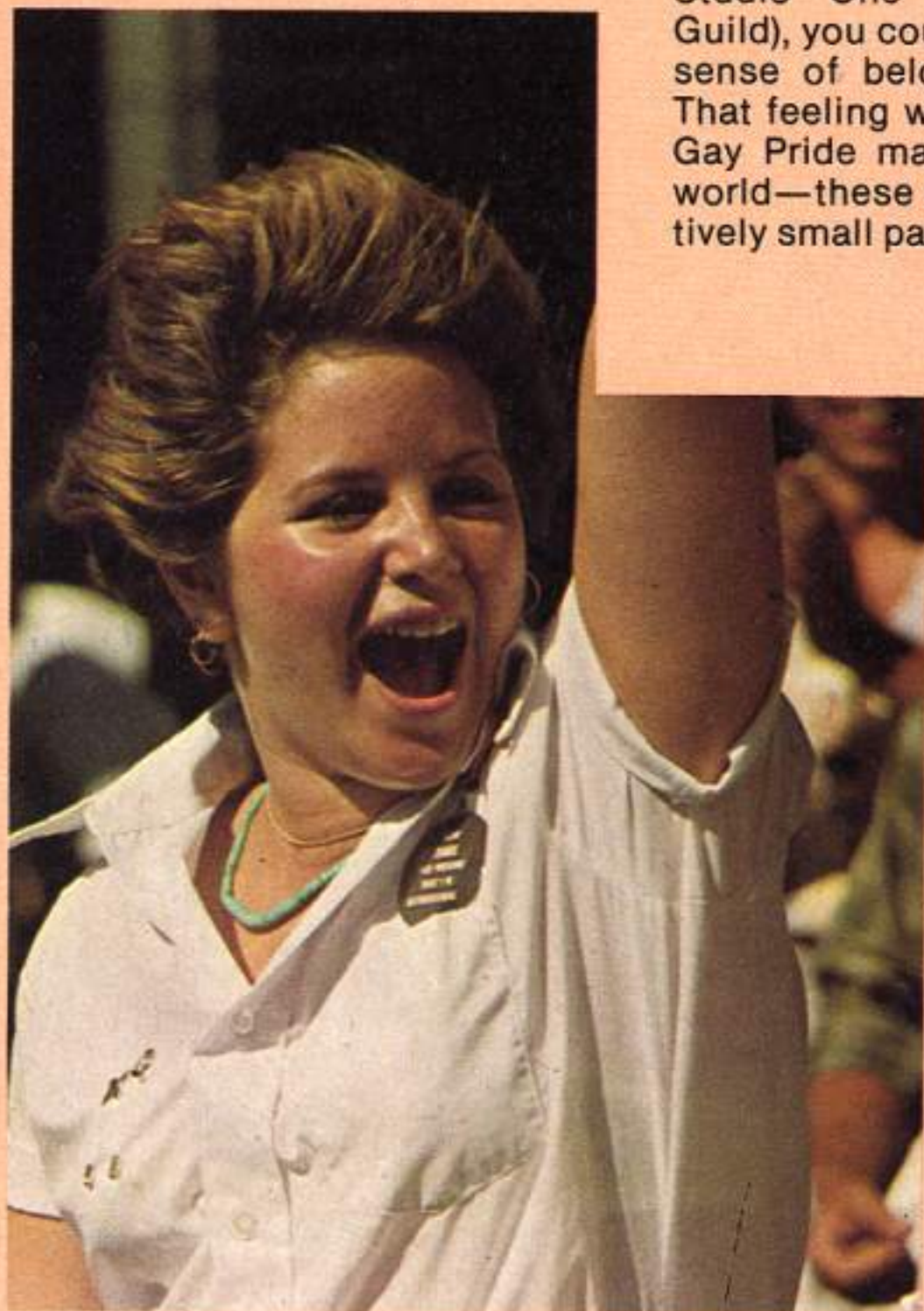


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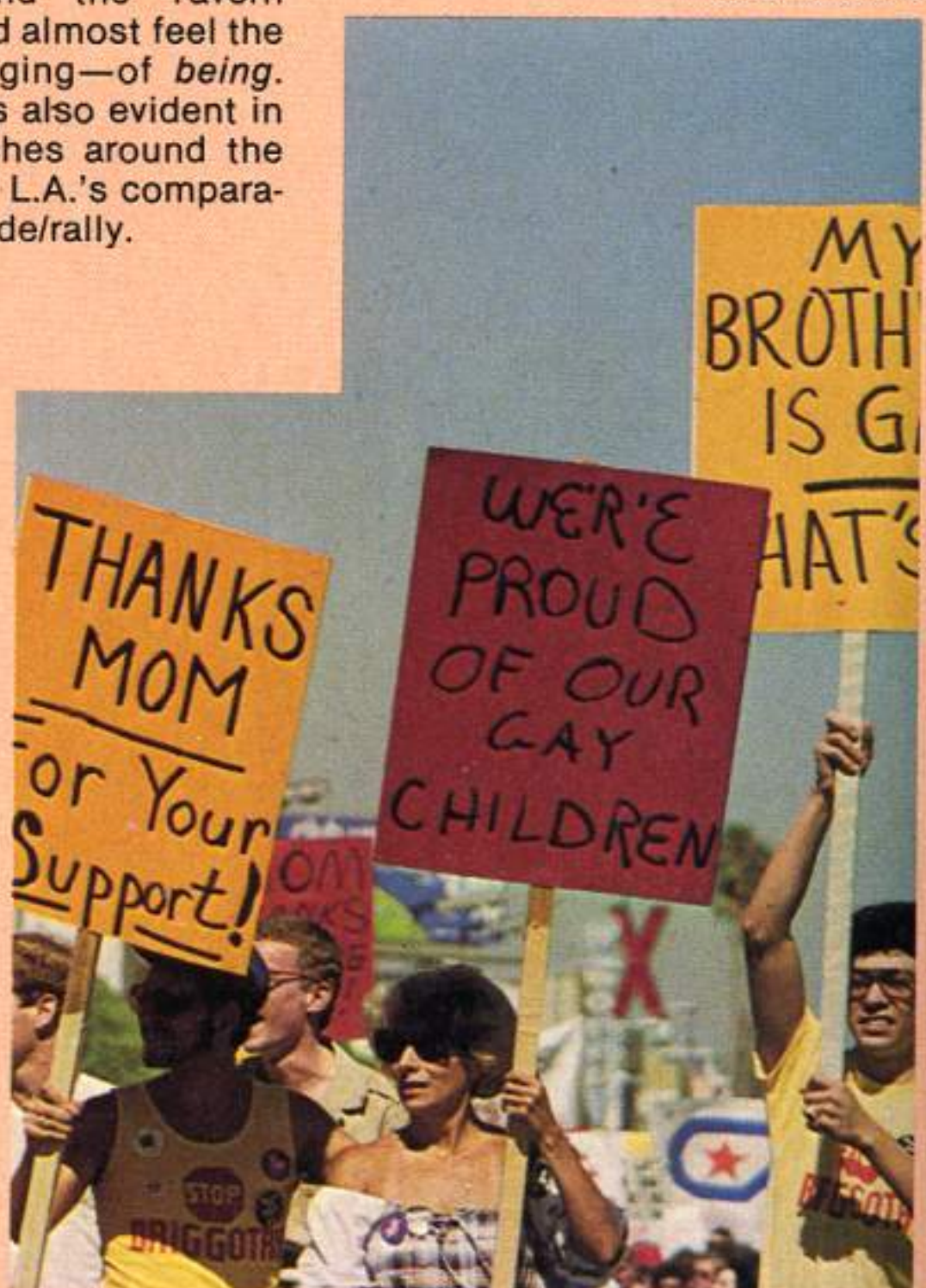
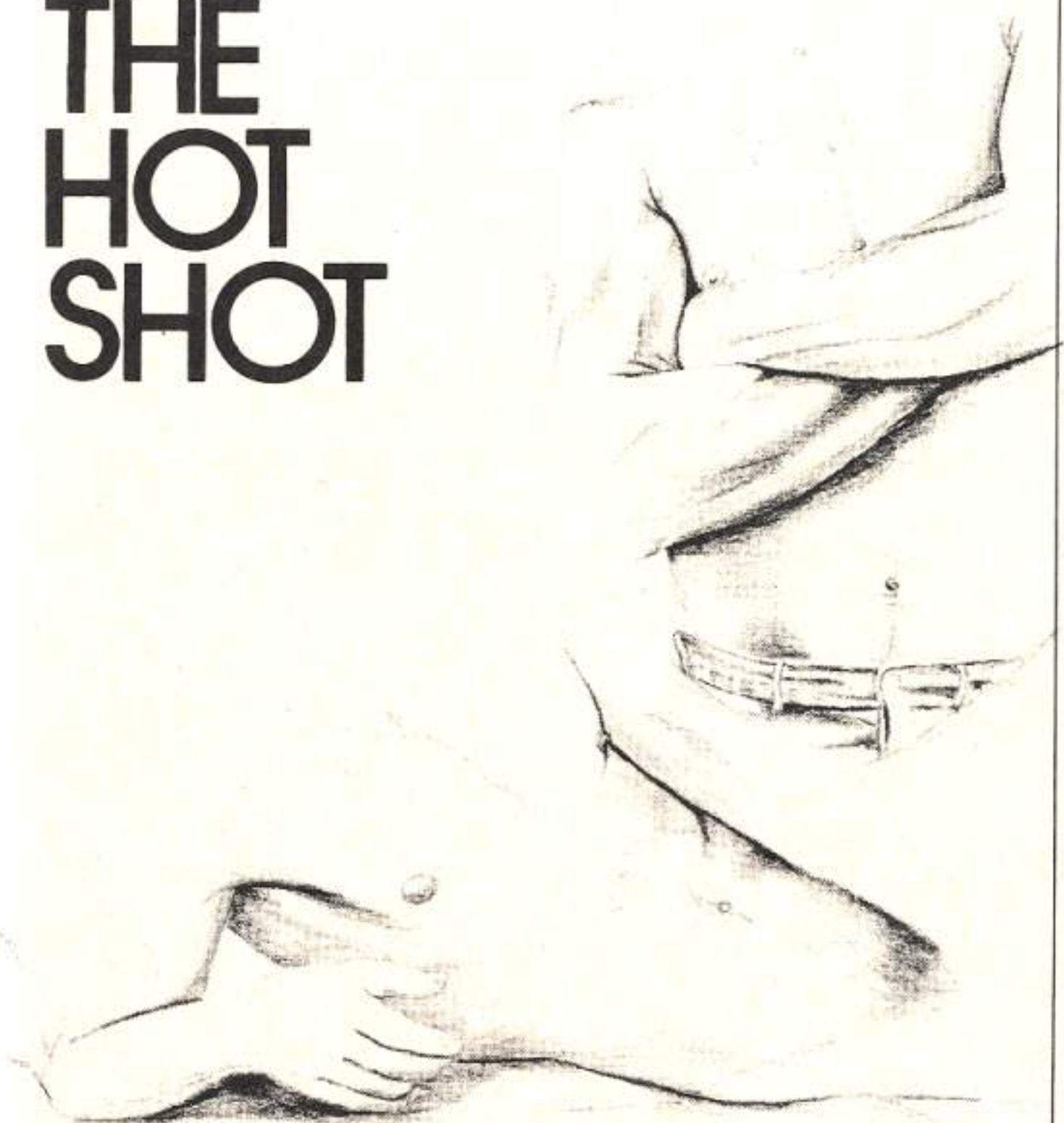


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NIGHTLIFE

(continued from page 16)

tently fine work and offers some of the newer and more unusual theater in the Bay Area. It's easily accessible to restaurants and bars in the Castro district. Try one of their midnight shows and then spend after-hours at the **Trocadero Transfer**, (520 4th St.) and disco till dawn.

Across from gay-chic **Alta Plaza** bar is a good seafood restaurant named appropriately **Don't Call It Frisco** (2298 Filmore at Clay). Prices range from \$5 up, and include tuna, sea bass, halibut, and a tasty seafood mornay casserole. Entrees are served with choice of soup or salad in this old Victorian setting open until 11pm Fri.-Sat., and weekdays and Sun. until ten.

Watch for the opening of the **Village Cabaret** (2275 Market)—a new disco brought to you by the people from **Oilcan Harry's** (709 Larkin).

Billboard has named Marty Bleckman of **Alfies** (2140 Market) number one DJ of San Francisco. Donna Summers presented him the award at the New York Hilton grand ballroom. Marty says its "selection and technique" and we think he's referring to records. "How you go from one song to another—lay over, lay

under, etc." He's working on a DJ handbook now!

"Keys to the City," a gay coupon book, is now being offered to "help gay businesses build a stronger community." San Francisco gay consumers, estimated to number between 100,000 and 150,000, with a total purchasing power of \$1.4 billion annually, can purchase this well-represented coupon book and receive discounts at the same time as spending gay money at gay businesses. Key's director, Jim Hoffman, asks, "Everyone knows where the gay bars and baths are, but where do you find a gay plumber?" The coupon book will let you know. Those interested in more information contact: Keys to the City, PO Box 6038, San Francisco, 94101 or call: (415) 921-0135.

Fife's, a new resort for gay men and women and their friends, is now open on the Russian River in Guerneville, CA. Fifty comfortable cabins are nestled under 14 acres of beautiful towering redwoods. There's a beach on the river as well as a pool. The restaurant serves excellent food with aplomb. The bar and dance floor are spacious and the fireplace room is very cozy. It will be open nine months of the year, so get in touch—romance never had it so good. For reservations call: (707) 869-0656.

—Dan Turner

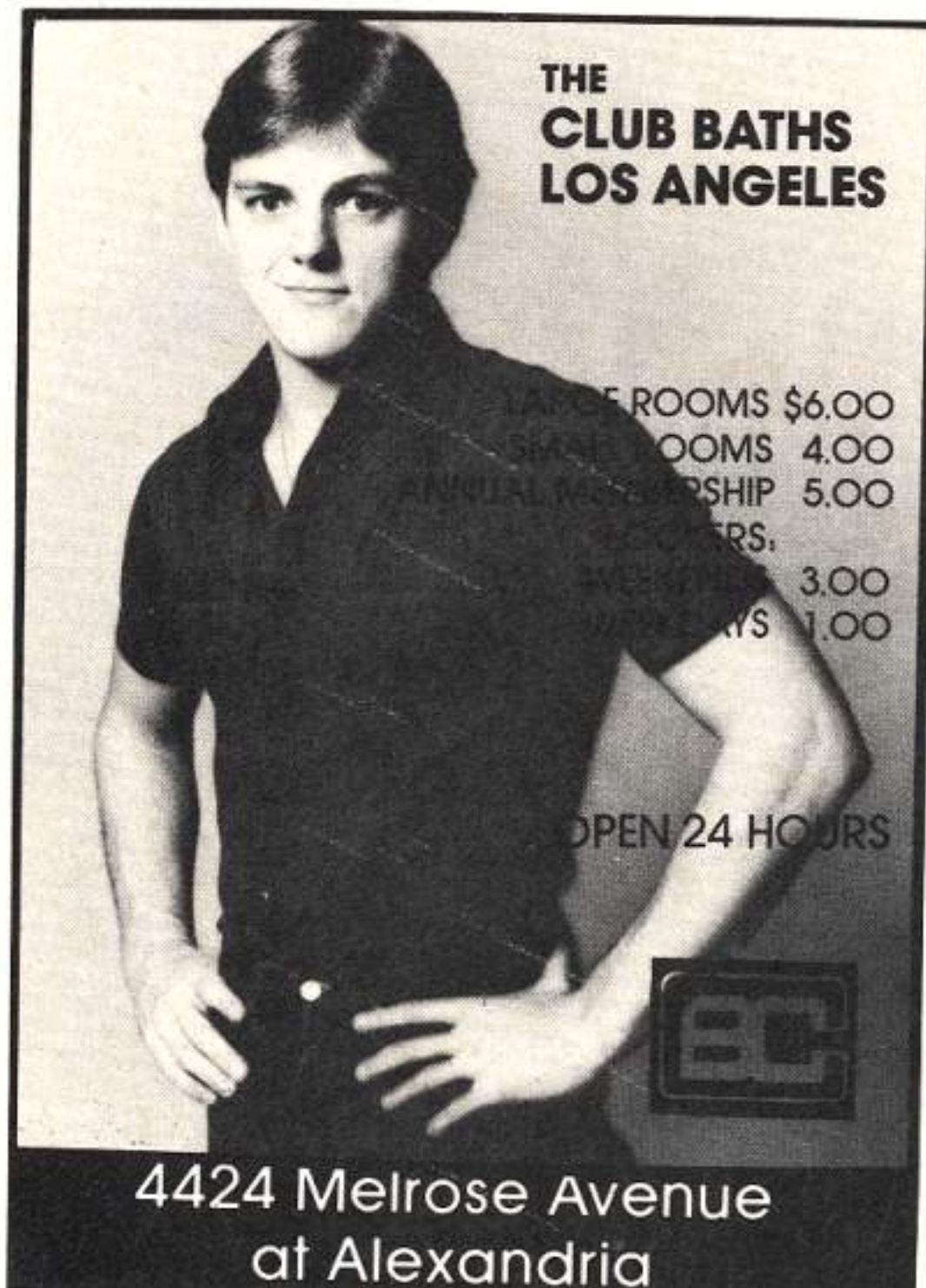
LOS ANGELES

There's probably some deep psychological implication in the current interest in Dracula projects. With two different stage productions about the infamous Count playing in New York—*Dracula* on Broadway and *The Passion of Dracula* Off-Broadway—and several movie projects in the works, suffice it to say that sucking is in this season.

The Transylvanian strain of this popular L.A. pastime is presently being demonstrated at the Music Center's **Ahmanson Theater**, where managing director Robert Fryer is opening his 1978-79 season with the national company of *Dracula*. A musical version (*Dracula, a Musical Nightmare*) is a total delight at the **Zephyr** (7854 Melrose) through Sept. 18.

Still to come in Fryer's season at the Ahmanson are a new musical by Neil Simon, *A Man For All Seasons* with Charlton Heston (well, he sells tickets) and a revival of *Pygmalion*.

George C. Scott brightened up the summer in his tour (as in *de force*) in *Sly Fox* at the **Shubert Theater**. This was Scott's first stage appearance in L.A., and he quickly proved he is quite a comedian, effortlessly sailing from burlesque shtick to high comedy in Larry




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Gelbart's hilarious adaptation of *Volpone*, transferred to San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Arthur Penn directed with a marvelous sense of the material and Scott was surrounded by most of the outstanding company with whom he worked on Broadway.

Luis Valdez' investigation of the L.A. Sleepy Lagoon murders and the Zoot Suit riots of the 1940s is back at the **Mark Taper Forum**, where it had a brief sold-out run earlier this year as part of the Taper's New Theater for Now series of new plays. Since then, Valdez has re-written *Zoot Suit* for this regular season production, which opens Gordon Davidson's 1978-79 series.

The **Huntington Hartford's** excellent reprieve of *For Colored Girls*... may be carried through Sept. (to be followed, in late Oct., by a one-man show by Victor Borge).

The bar and disco scene remains as varied as ever, offering something for everyone. **Studio One** still reigns as the major dance palace, but by the time this column is out **Scandals** should be open and giving local pleasure seekers an additional place to boogie and be entertained. Leonard Grant (who used to be entertainment director at Studio One) is in charge of **Scandals**, which features a disco, showroom and private upstairs club. It's located in Hollywood on La Brea Ave. where the Fog Cutter used to be. Bet they never dreamed they'd be cutting the kind of fog that's raising from that place now.

With a town as spread out as L.A.—both geographically and philosophically—visitors can be assured that, no matter what their taste, there's something going on just for them. From the **Stud** on Melrose (4216) to **Boots** (12319 Ventura Blvd.) in the Valley, mild-to-heavy leather lovers can find whatever it is they might be looking for. Good restaurant fanciers have a literal smorgasbord, from the **Carriage Trade** (8225 Beverly Blvd.) in West Hollywood to **The Office** (13817 Ventura Blvd.) in Sherman Oaks. Come on out and see for yourself.

—Ron Englert

ATLANTA

"Half a mile" (CBS News) of gays marched through downtown Atlanta to "welcome" Anita Bryant when she came here to address the Southern Baptist Convention in June. The actual figure was somewhere between "1,800" (Atlanta *Constitution*) and "4,000" (march organizers Vic Host and Linda Regnier), but it was our largest demonstration yet and drew some support from the straight community as well.

A fund-raising affair at the **Sweet Gum Head** (2284 Cheshire Bridge Rd.) a few nights before raised \$3800, including

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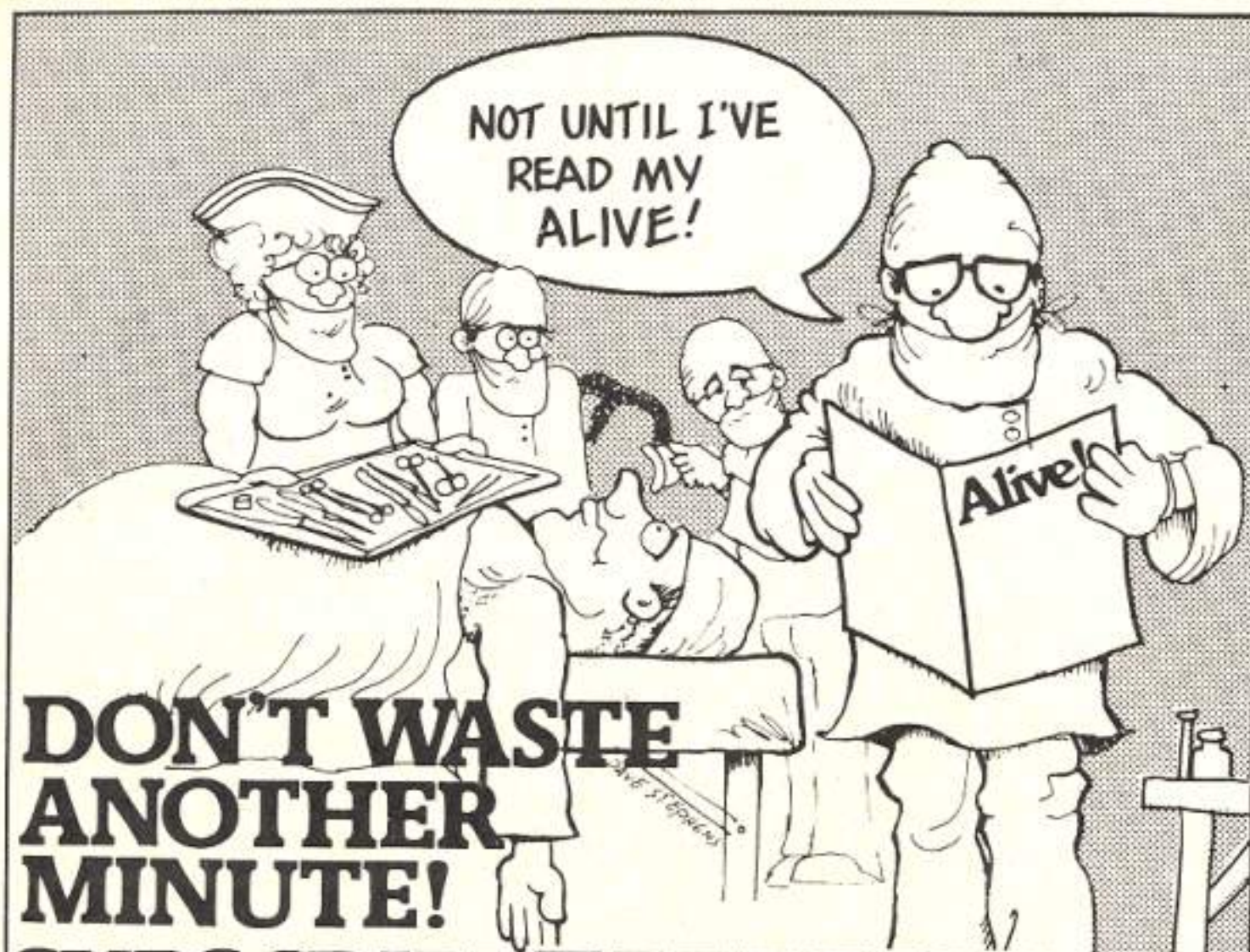
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\$500 from Frank Powell of **Frank Powell's** restaurant and piano bar (13th and West Peachtree), and \$200 cash from Sweet Gum Head manager John Austin, who also donated the club for the night.

With us in spirit at the demonstration was singer-actress Dorothy Collins, who would have attended if she hadn't been giving a performance of *I Do! I Do!* at the **Harlequin Dinner Theater** at the same time. The show, which co-starred the incredible Larry Shue, was easily the best of the past year at the Harlequin; but the theater, plagued by impossible overhead and poor attendance (at generally poor shows) may well be closed by the time you read this.

One of the Harlequin turkeys was *Hanky Panky*, which featured Richard Egan doing an outrageous "fag" bit. I was so offended that I spent over an hour with the actor, trying to raise his consciousness. After a period of total indignation he became defensive, but insisted he had meant no offense: "I purposely played it as ludicrously as possible so no one could take it seriously." I patiently explained that dinner-theater audiences were exactly the kind of people who *could* take it seriously, like the congressmen who believe they have no gay people in their districts because they don't know anyone who fits the stereotype. Egan finally agreed to add a disclaimer to his curtain speech—but he'd already been touring in the atrocity for over a year.

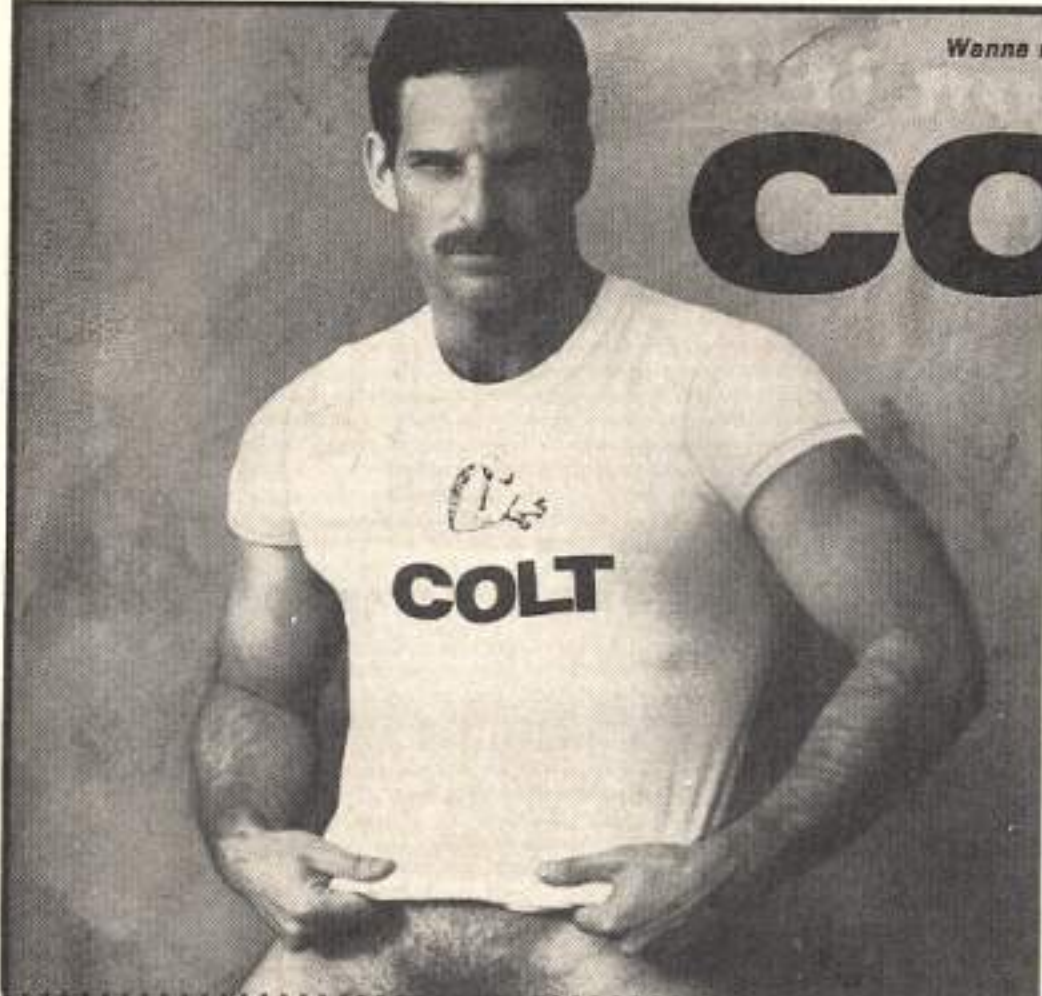
A more pleasant interview (especially visually!) was Jeff Conaway, who plays Kenickie in *Grease*. He complained that the acting schools in L.A. are turning out performers for television, but are no good for someone who wants to get deeper into his craft. The TV industry, he says, makes an actor feel "like a hamburger"—the old "meat rack" lament.

Here to promote her first movie, *Thank God It's Friday* (she's the teenybopper who wins the dance contest), Valerie Landsburg spent her night off boogieing at **Back Street** (845 Peachtree), sent there by a friend in L.A. who knows DJ Antonio Solar. Landsburg, who prefers stage work to films and wants to do musicals, is touring this summer as Paul Lynde's daughter in *The Impossible Years*.

Already reigning as "Mr. Deep South" and "Mr. New Orleans," Tommy Toutsaint added the title of "Mr. Locker Room 1978" in the third annual competition at the **Locker Room** bath and disco (2325 Cheshire Bridge Rd.) Your reporter was among the judges who chose Toutsaint and runners-up Curtis Ezel and Ron Ellis.

Famous for its parties, **Stephen's Saloon** (1833 Peachtree Rd.) topped them all with this year's week-long Back-to-School Party at the end of August.

(continued on page 78)



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World Reports



Costumes and camp are the order of the day during Melbourne's Queen's Birthday festivities.

Melbourne

There's no lack of variety in gay scenes around the world, and often some surprising imagination. For an example of an annual event that's rather different, try the Queen's Birthday Annual Picnic in Melbourne.

Every winter in Melbourne there's a kind of gay fest on the Queen's Birthday

long-weekend, and a special day of gay revelry in mock homage to British royalty. A hangover from the days of Empire, when monarchs were taken seriously, little is now left of the pomp and ceremony of the occasion except the new uses found for it as a tongue-in-cheek gay celebration.

The picnic begins at some downtown parking-lot check-point, with a convivial procession of maybe 300 cars heading for the secret "bush" rendezvous in Mel-



Photo by Paul Drakeford

The Australian equivalent of Gay Pride Week in the U.S. and Canada, the Queen's Birthday brings evidence of gay love out into the open.

Revelers try to out-do one another in elaborately costumed parodies of royalty.

bourne's Dandenong Ranges, where the cries of parakeets and bellbirds in the tall eucalyptus are silenced by the arrival of several hundred from the local gay community, and visiting weekenders from all around the country.

The British Queen, or some other royal personage, becomes the presiding figure of the day in a parody of pomp and glory. Last year it was the Silver Jubilee, this year the Queen of All Galaxies arrived by full-scale space rocket and minions to make contact with earthly monarchs (the 'first encounter of the worst kind'). Contemporary events, even social and political comment, have a way of being grafted on to the royal occasion and prevent it from growing stale. Last year the most traumatic blow-up in recent Australian political life was reflected in the program. History also rears its ugly head: Queen Victoria and Elizabeth the First have actually been dis-interred for some 20th century carry-on.

Throw in the ceremonious presentation of awards to local identities for various salacious doings, competitive events such as the KY Relay, or the



Slaves' Derby, or Tossing the Dildoe, plenty of show-business pizzaz, and you've got the kind of self-mockery that is now a definition of the word 'gay' the world over. Not to mention the competitive teams of 'marching girls': Scottish highlanders, nuns, space troops etc. in well-rehearsed style. The addition of 300 gallons of local wine and crates of Melbourne beer (a very heady brew) plus a lavish feast of roasted meats and trim-

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things add up to a full day and romping might either on the disco floor, or for less public pursuits behind the barn or in the bush.

The Melbourne picnic series began in 1959 in the Christmas Hills, and, except for a break or two, has kept afloat ever since. It transferred to Kangaroo Ground, from where the present organizers took charge and are now celebrating their tenth anniversary. The years have reflected changing lifestyles: at times it's been drag and glitter, at other times there's a more macho air to it.

If you're in Australia next year and would like a merry old royal romp in the hills, with six or seven hundred local guys for athletic support, then the date is June 3rd, and the royal guest to be invited next time is (wait for it) Prince Andrew. In leather.

—Mark Rowan

Paris

Friends, when they visit Paris, say that it's hard telling the gay men from the straight men and that they've often been caught in an embarrassing situation due both to their indecision and their indiscretion. Well, I've never noticed any difference between the two camps, never made the same

characteristics of both sexes, thereby confusing the American tourist. Moreover, the French male, gay or otherwise, is comfortable in his role (that of a male). He is not trying to stand out in a crowd, nor, by any means, draw attention to himself—either by acting macho or by camping it up.

Nothing annoys me more than when American gays get together in a group and start calling each other by a girl's name or by replacing "he" with "she."

An interesting film, released in France in 1976, was *La Meilleure Façon de Marcher* (released in the States as *The Best Way*). Here, we have a film that attempts to dissect the complexities of a relationship between two young men and asks the question (without ever giving a satisfactory answer): "What is a man; what is masculine?" Obviously, there is femininity and masculinity in all of us. It's only when we carry it too far either way that the trouble starts and the fingers begin to point. I wasn't too crazy about Philippe (Patrick Bouchitey) who liked to dress up in women's clothes and wear make-up; but the fact that Marc (Patrick Dewaere) was attracted to him lessened my dismay and cooled my uptightness about men who try to act or look like women.

A friend recently sent me John Reid's *The Best Little Boy in the World*. Here is

Nine, Reid says it like it is—or, rather, like I wish it were: "... if femininity were what turned me on, I would be straight. I like masculinity ... I don't think I'm feminine myself, even though I like guys. Yet, that's the stereotype—that deep down all faggots really want to be girls. Well, there is no way I ever want to look or act feminine ... if I liked femininity, I wouldn't be gay."

The point of all this, I hope, aside from justifying my own insignificant existence, is to convey the fact that the French gay male is for the most part invisible in the proverbial crowd. He's not fighting for equal rights (he already has them) like gays are in the States (they have them, too, but don't know it). He's not running around screeching "gay is beautiful"; and he's certainly not going around calling his male friends "Sally." He's satisfied being what he is—a male who happens to like other males. And apparently, Parisian homosexuals know a good thing when they see it. They're not letting it all hang out like their American counterparts. They know that if they flaunt their sexuality in the faces of straights, they're going to be persecuted all the way to the grave.

And as the best little boy in the world said: "When the unlikely day comes that no one does care that I sleep with guys, there will indeed be nothing to tell anyone about."

—Peter Adams

Amsterdam

About 1,000 people walked through the streets of Amsterdam on Saturday, June 24th in a Gay Freedom Day March. Except for some loud battlecries from some radical lesbians, the walk was quiet and almost solemn. By the time the group reached Amsterdam's famous Vondel Park, the crowd had grown to 3,000 people.

Significantly, Dutch newspapers the next day reported on the march and spoke in terms of 'homosexual oppression,' not just 'discrimination.' Once again, the liberal Dutch have raised a public outcry against the current so-called backlash being suffered by gays in America and England.

The COC, Holland's oldest and most respected homosexual organization, held a dance that same evening at their local disco/bar in Amsterdam. Also held on the evening of the 24th was a disco at the *Brakke Grond Festgeeb* (53-55 Nes, telephone 243821). Although not exclusively gay, this affair is a great favorite among gays because of the general atmosphere of liberation and integration, where sexism is virtually non-existent.

The *Brakke Grond* is an old, rather run-down theater which is being revived, and

(continued on 70)



Photo by Paul Drakelord

Slaves' Derby, or Tossing the Dildoe, plenty of show-business pizzazz, and you've got the kind of self-mockery that is now a definition of the word 'gay' the world over. Not to mention the competitive teams of 'marching girls': Scottish highlanders, nuns, space troops etc. in well-rehearsed style. The addition of 300 gallons of local wine and crates of Melbourne beer (a very heady brew) plus a lavish feast of roasted meats and trim-

mistakes my American friends made; and furthermore, am completely satisfied with the status quo. The point is that French gay men and straight men blend so much so that it takes a practiced eye to determine who's what.

Does this mean that the gay men are more "masculine" and the straight men more "feminine"? No, of course not. But it does mean that the average French male imperceptibly takes on some of the

a character I can almost identify with—a guy who is masculine, wants it that way, and wouldn't have it any other way. The book has its flaws and some of the dialogue and the protagonist's thoughts are downright embarrassing. However, author Reid admits his shortcomings, which is to his credit. At the same time, he's come up with a gay character who is believable throughout most of the book. And, by God, he's masculine. In chapter



By Roger Asquith

HOROSCOPE

virgo

August 23 — September 22

Love and fun dominate this period. It's also a good time to form a lasting relationship with a special friend, so learn some new jokes and develop a new feel for things. Have some compliments ready after the session. How this marriage thing floated across your chart I don't know. Well, it's there. Maybe that aforementioned long-lasting relationship is for real. Great, it couldn't happen to a nicer guy and the old whorehouse won't be the same without you . . . we won't have to wait in line to use the john.

libra

September 23 — October 22

Friends are going to be taking up a lot of your time these days. Most of them are really selfish and taking advantage of your good nature . . . so really look them over before you make any promises. If they don't measure up to your expectations, tell them to shove it some place else. It's a good time to go on vacation. If you are trim and slim, the beach scene is good—if not, it's the dark corner of the steam room and a large towel . . . and take your purse in with you. If you've had it—the vacation, that is—renew your tan and your sex drive by sneaking off for a dirty weekend. You deserve it.

scorpio

October 23 — November 22

Money seems to be plaguing you at the moment . . . too much going out and not enough coming in . . . which is the same problem the actress had with the Bishop. Stoking up your bank balance is a must. Try your old corner on Fifth and Main and see if you can hustle up some action. If this fails, try some honest work—working two jobs may play havoc with your sex life, so get a job in the whorehouse . . . making the beds. Maybe a little extra work is what you need, a chance to get out a little. That bedroom scene can get awfully boring, and it's now time to let the fresh wind of reality blow up your corridors.

sagittarius

November 23 to December 21

You need to satisfy that urge you have early in the day and then leave plenty of time free for the other one . . . that's if you're two-timing. In other words, have it before breakfast and then get some real work done before your Nooner. Things may sag a little during the afternoon, but you should be able to rise to the occasion in time for the cocktail hour at your favorite watering hole. If all this jives with you, how about a short note on your diet and health routine? We could all use the knowledge. We have urges, too, you know. And if you had Wheaties for breakfast, include his phone number as well.

capricorn

December 22 — January 20

Friends you've made recently are likely to be around for awhile. Either waiting to see what develops or, if it already has, the name of the local quack. But you don't need these drips, there are bigger and better things around the corner if you care to look. Of course everyone knows you're not easily satisfied. We're not all late-comers, you know, so bare with the guys who go off half cocked and teach them your routine. If you do have time for anything else these days, how about catching up with your backlog of unanswered letters and phone calls . . . and your roommate has forgotten what you look like.

aquarius

January 21 — February 19

Moderation is the order of the day. Slow down and find out where you're at . . . there was no need to chase him, anyway—he'll be there again tomorrow night. But this time wear tighter pants and he won't take to his heels. On the financial side, you've been digging a little too deep into your account. Hide your credit cards and find a Sugar Daddy. Who told you it wouldn't wear out? Your sorry financial status doesn't mean you should go for the get-rich-quick schemes or listen to tales of instant wealth. Be nice to big Daddy even if he isn't, but don't give him any credit . . . and d'you really need that cash register in the bedroom?

pisces

February 20 — March 20

If you've got a credit problem, now is the time to sort it out. Dig deep and get to grips with the situation . . . and remember—never leave your credit card in the bath house again. Making long range plans is also a good idea, especially if you're in business. Whether you take the pledge and clean up, or pledge the take and clear out, just remember: don't leave any tracks. If an older lover won't let go or a younger one won't grab on, organize a menage-a-trois with the local dog and you play the bitch. But don't expect any new tricks . . .

aries

March 21 — April 20

Something is moving through your sign which is associated with sport . . . Have you been hanging in the dugout again? Or taken a job in the locker room at the gym? Good for you—at least you know where the action is before and after the game. Tell your friends what a good sport you are and take along your Polaroid to prove it. Candid pictures are worth a thousand words, especially if he's about to score. If sport isn't your bag, you don't have to spoil it for the others . . . a few bedroom shots are always good for a laugh and everybody loves bedroom games . . . come on, now, let's have a good exposure.

taurus

April 21 — May 21

This is the period when you'll feel the pinch, financially speaking, that is. You've been pinching a feel for too long, but he did enjoy it. Now it's time to think about earning some money and paying off a few creditors. Slowing down on some of your wilder activities won't hurt any. Cork up the bottle, be it liquor or lubricant, and devote some time to making money. It's not a good time to quit jobs. On the contrary, you should find another one. You have a lot of energy and drive and a retinue of satisfied lovers to prove it, but unless they're willing to support you, it's back to the old salt mine, you big, hunky beast.

gemini

May 22 — June 21

Bargains seem to be coming your way. Everybody else has to pay him double, but for you he'll take half off . . . and you can lift up the rest. Your business or working conditions this period could be a little strained, unless you toe the line or drop the soap. Apples for the teacher worked fine, but your boss has had it up to here in the apple orchard, now he wants to shop in the meat market and, like Shylock, is demanding his pound of flesh. Give until it hurts and press even harder to get that extra raise. Who knows, you might get to be president in charge of vice . . . or vice versa. Go get 'em.

cancer

June 22 — July 22

Being a sentimentalist, you probably keep a closet full of souvenirs including a few jockstraps in memory of those who passed over and under. No need to toss everything out, but it's time to refreshen some of your memories. There's a whole gang out there banging away and doing their thing. Why not join the line and have yours done for you? Start collecting something warm and alive for a change, but schedule your load wisely so that it can be handled efficiently. Your appetite for sweet things is apparent, so tell him to knock off the earrings and the hot pink coiffure . . . at least while you're in bed.

leo

July 23 — August 22

According to the chart, the time for creating something special is now. So, all you hair-benders, now is your chance to really show Madam what you think of her. You lesser mortals could bake a cake, or write that novel—but do something new . . . even if you don't know his name. You should also cooperate a little more with others, loosen up and, if necessary, remove them altogether . . . behind closed doors, of course. Anyone in the building trade should do well . . . especially if you are working near a comfort station or truck stop. You may have a little competition, but not after you've displayed your special assets.

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BACK ISSUES

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Rick Herold, Grand Funk Fashion

#9 (JUNE)

Rick Gates, California Casual Fashion, Coming Out On Broadway

#12 (SEPTEMBER)

Alice Faye, Earl Wilson Jr., Nick Nolte, San Francisco Fashion

#14 (NOVEMBER)

Beau Bridges, Dakota, Skiing, Off-Off-Broadway

1975

#15 (DEC./JAN.)

John Calvin, Yucatan

#18 (JUNE/JULY)

Glenda Jackson, Polk Street, Natchez, Grant Tracy Saxon, New Orleans

#19 (AUG./SEPT.)

Shirley MacLaine, Robert Morse, LaBelle, Jim Cassidy, Pat Rocco, Ed Fury, Fire Island

#20 (OCT./NOV.)

Tab Hunter, Paris, Columbia Ann-Margaret, Michael Greer

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Elton John, Anne Baxter, Joseph Bottoms, Elizabeth Taylor, Chicago, Clyde Dayton Wallace, Art of Harry Bush, Tom DeSimone

#22 (MAR./APR.)

Barbra Streisand, Melba Moore, Shirley Bassey, Bruce Davison, Tom O'Horgan, New York

#23 (MAY/JUNE)

Tennessee Williams, Sal Mineo, Martin Sheen, Cocteau's Sailors, London, Atlanta, Gotham

#24 (JULY/AUG.)

Christopher Isherwood, Russ Tamblyn, Wakefield Poole, Haiti, San Francisco, Patricia Nell Warren's "Front Runner," Tattoos, Making It In La Jolla

#25 (SEPT./OCT.)

Warren Beatty, Bette Midler, Peter Berlin, Los Angeles, Harry Bush's IN TOUCH Sketchbook, "The Outlaw"

#26 (NOV./DEC.)

Robert Redford, Jan-Michael Vincent, Lucille Ball, Australia, Boston, Walt Whitman, Men Together

1977

#27 (JAN./FEB.)

California Men, William S. Burroughs, Pittsburgh, Miami, Marilyn Monroe, Jeff Bridges, J. Brian's Blue World, Melville & Moby Dick, Buns

#28 (MAR./APR.)

David Bowie, Phoenix, Canada, Jack Wrangler, Gymnasts Together, James Leo Herlihy

#29 (MAY/JUNE)

Dave Kopay, John Rechy, John Denver, Timothy Bottoms, Al Parker, Salt Lake City, E.M. Forster, Jack Deveau, New Hampshire, Robin Maugham

#30 (JULY/AUG.)

Burt Reynolds, Washington, D.C., Michael Ontkean, Van Johnson, Mykonos, "Mysteries," Peter de Rome

#31 (SEPT./OCT.)

Amsterdam, Nick Nolte, Larry Kert, Paul Winfield, Joan Crawford, Christopher Mxrlowe, "Blanche, Scarlett & Me," "The Mars Picture"

#32 (NOV./DEC.)

John Holmes, New Zealand, Oscar Wilde, Vampire, San Francisco Cowboys, Jacques D'Amboise, Austin, The Emerald City, San Diego, A Night For Rights

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#33 (JAN./FEB.)

Nureyev, Steve McQueen, New Orleans, Don Ameche, "Sincere, Discreet . . ." Film: A Gay Odyssey, Hollywood Beefcake, Shaping Up, The Photography of James Williams, Drugs

#34 (MAR./APR.)

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#35 (MAY/JUNE)

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#36 (JULY/AUG.)

Hawaii, Keith Carradine, Gore Vidal, Gay Mythology (I), "No Crowns, Please," Village People, "Come Out, Come Out," VD, The Art of "Hoop," James Kirkwood

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WORLD REPORTS

(continued from 67)

which, as disco organizer Eddie de Clercq has shown, is still quite serviceable. Eddie visits the States regularly and comes back with the latest high records. The disco has proved to be such a success that Eddie plans to make the formerly once-a-month happening into a fortnightly thing.

It is certainly a must for anyone visiting Amsterdam. Ask the locals about it when you arrive, or call Eddie de Clercq on 721854, 'after dark,' and check it out if you can. The disco is on from 10pm to 4am and once you're in you may find yourself staying till closing time, sweating and staggering out from sheer physical exhaustion. A very liberating experience!

Another interesting periodic happening is the monthly 'LL Leather Party.' The LL is a leather and denim bar that sponsors 'parties' once a month at an old warehouse. Hundreds of gay men butch it up for an evening of heavy breathing and no-holds-barred fun. For details call 220-475.

A new place has opened in Amsterdam. Called **Cafe Flore** (Kerkstrat 4, phone 259-495), it's owned and run by Avi and Peter, the same people who run Amsterdam's famous **Orfeo Hotel**, and promises to be interesting. They advertise as Amsterdam's gay daytime rendezvous, offering late breakfast and weekend brunch, pool, card and game tables. The Cafe Flore is open 10am to 8pm, closed Tues. The Orfeo now also offers long-term (two weeks minimum) apartment-hotel accommodations. For details call 231-347.

For those with more subdued tastes, a visit to the local chapter of the **COC** (Korte Leidsedwarstraat 49a, phone 234-079) might be the answer. They have a coffee shop open from 8 to 12pm, Wed.-Sat. Also a women-only cafe, called **Het Rondje**, open on Fri. and Sun. from 8 to 12pm. There is a disco/bar on the ground floor for members and guests only, open nightly from 10:30pm to 2am, with Sun. as women-only night.

The people here are friendly and quite conscientious in gay activism. There is plenty of reading material and they often have scheduled activities such as lectures, symposia, discussion groups, etc. It can be a pleasant change from the commercial gay scene.

—John Stamford

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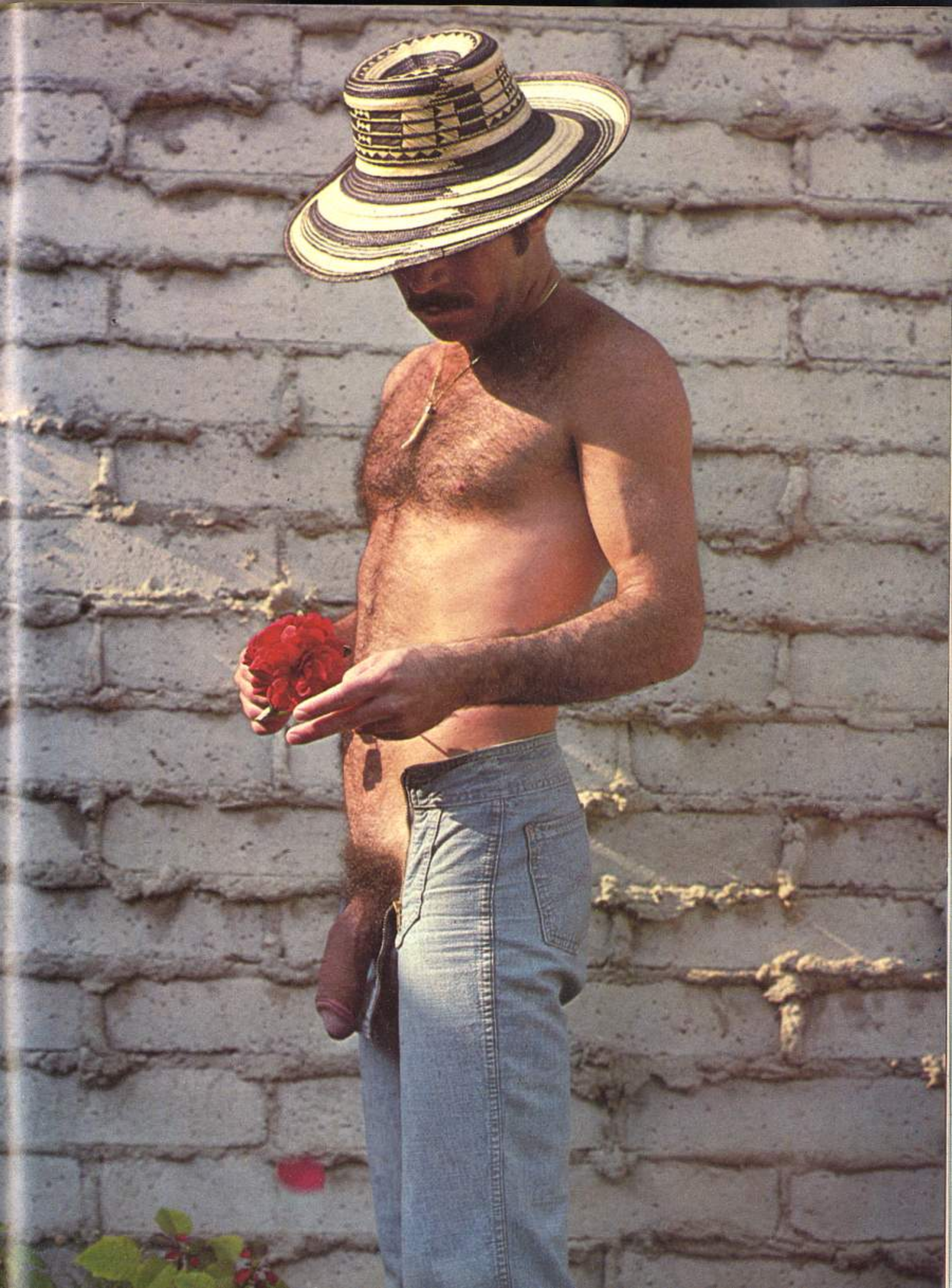
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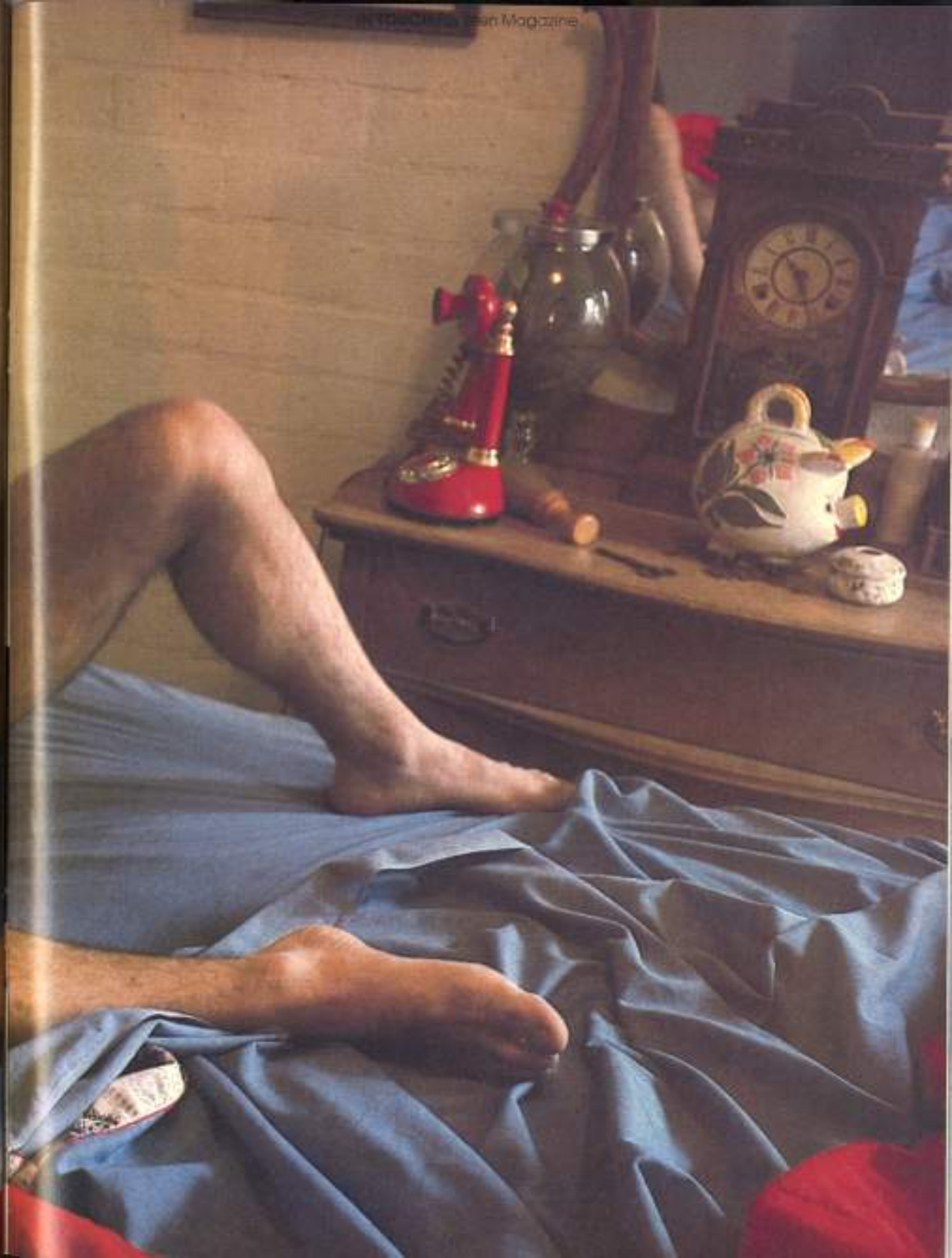
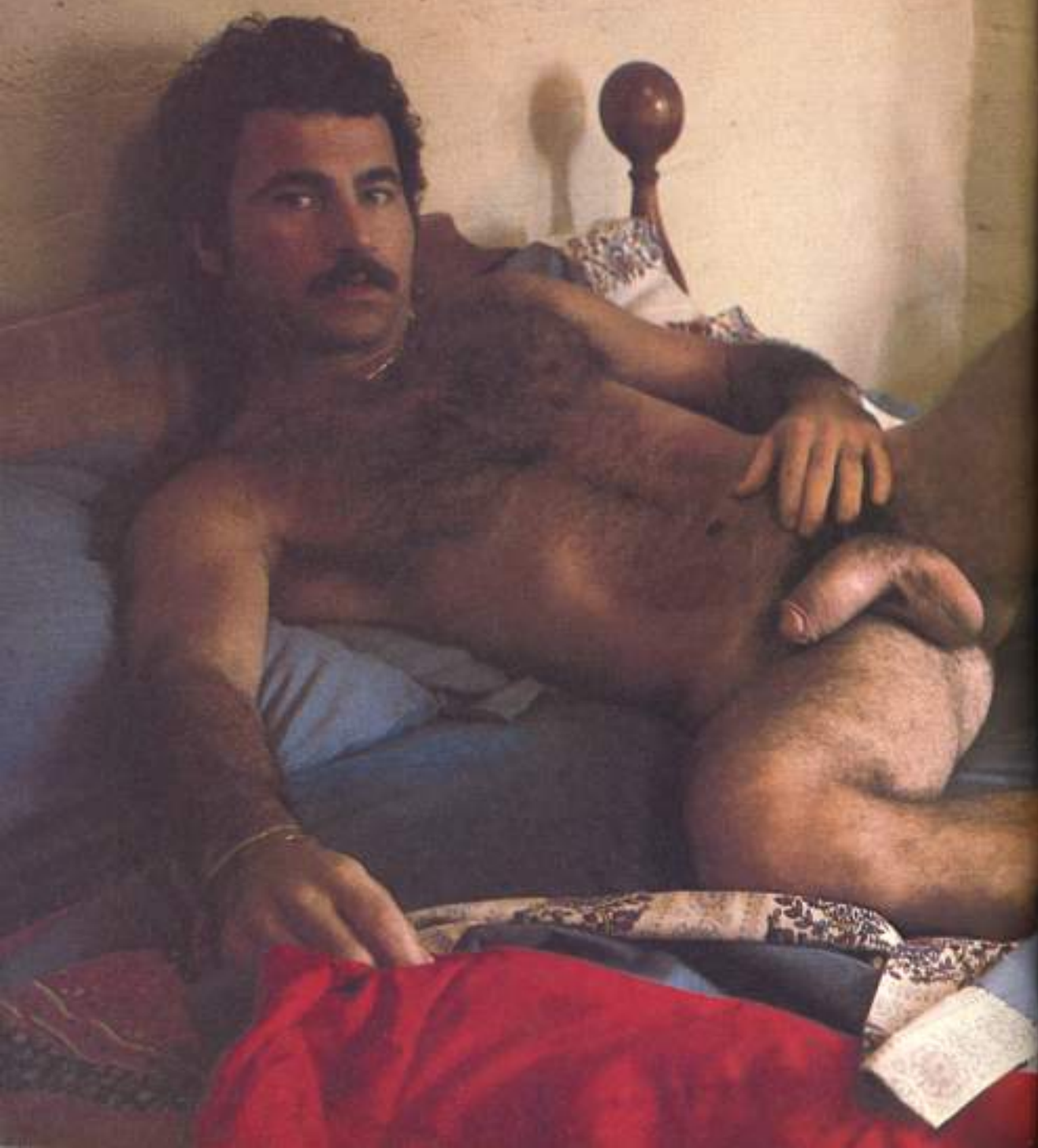
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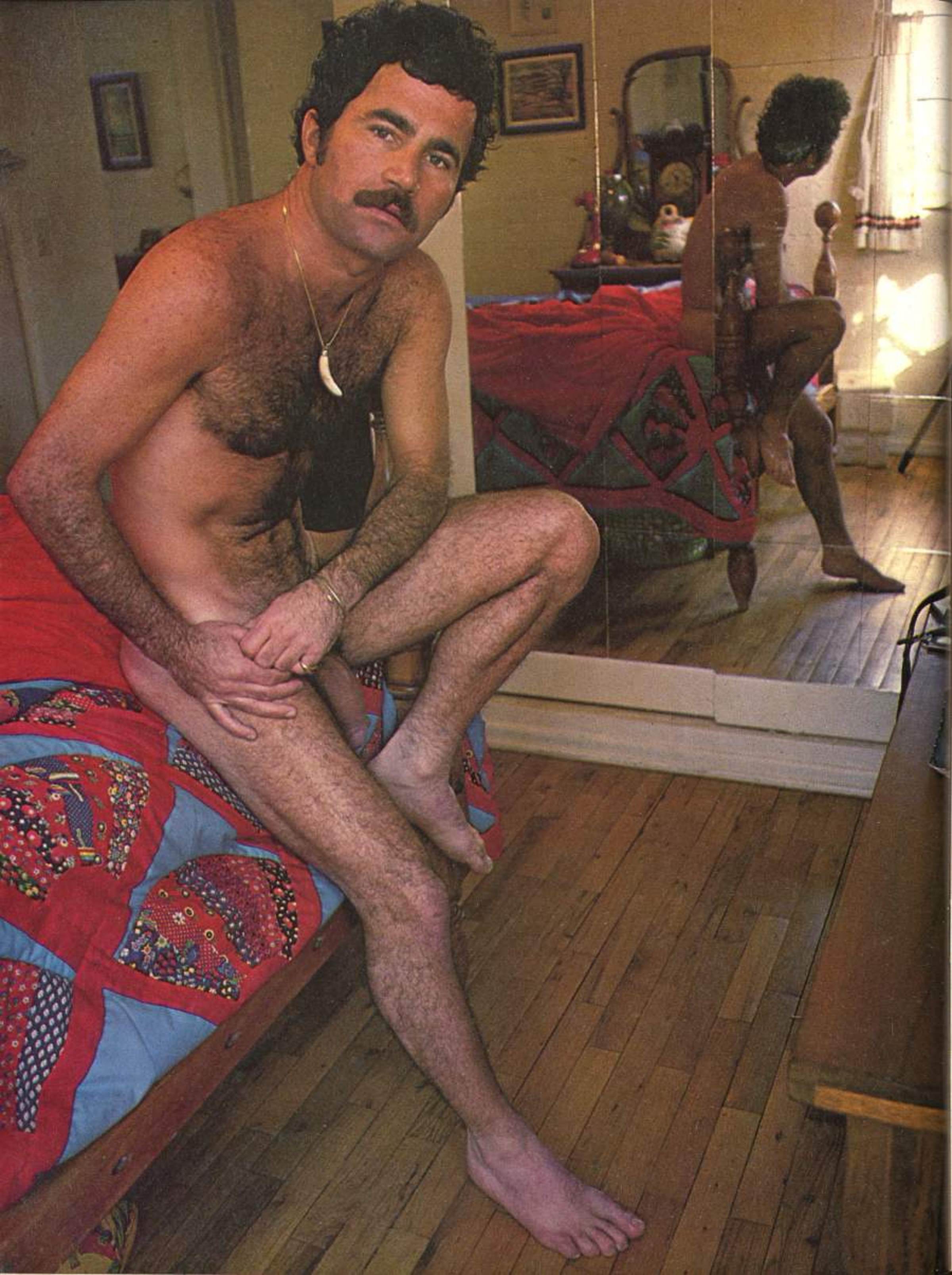
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RJS



Juan's a Columbian who divides his time between his native land and the United States, where he's studying cinematography. He's 32, a Scorpio, stands 5'8" tall, and weighs in at 138#. When he's not studying or traveling, Juan enjoys ice skating, skiing, and having an all-around good time.

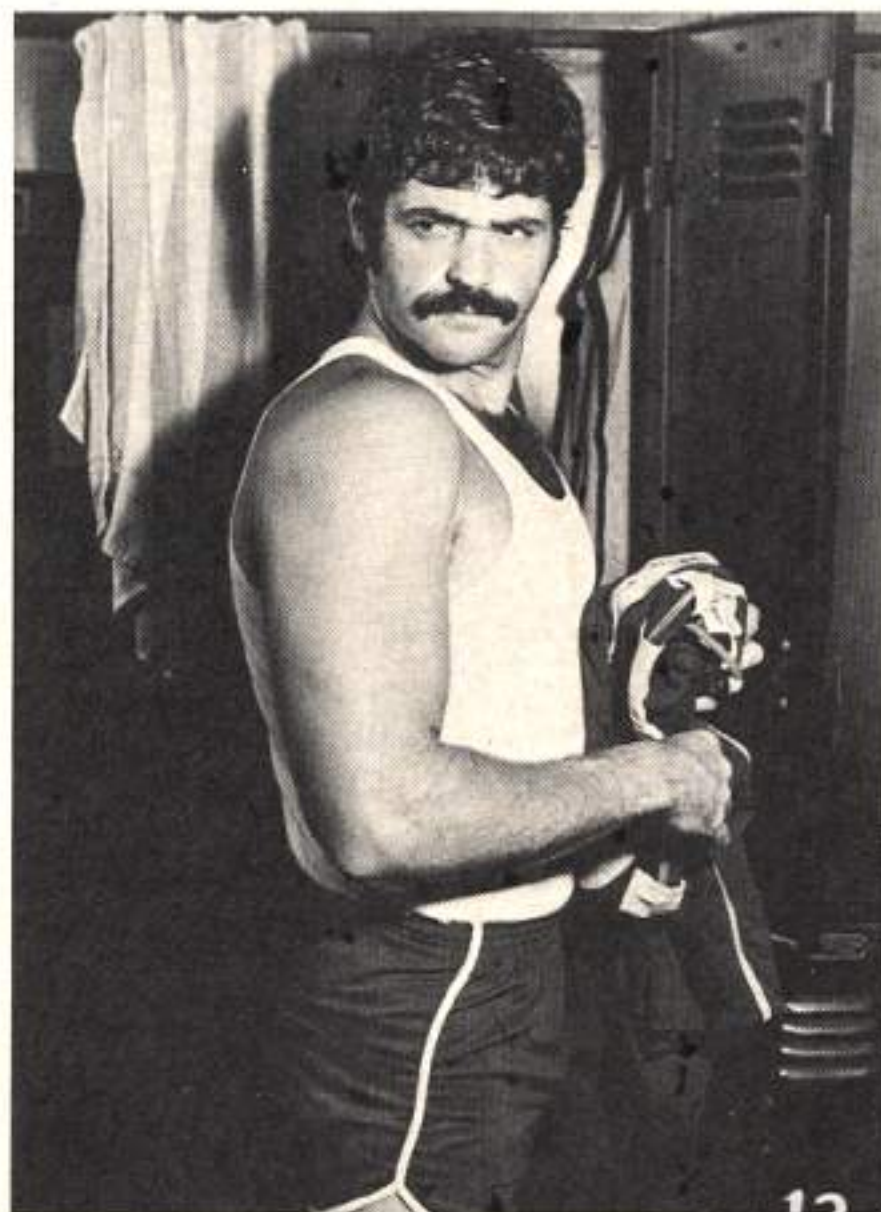






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NIGHTLIFE (continued from page 64)

Among the more unusual entertainers in town is David Clenney, who sings operatic arias to his own piano accompaniment on Friday nights at **El Matador** in Ansley Mall (Piedmont at Monroe). Gary Poe plays ragtime there on Saturday nights. On the same piano?

An important new face in town is Rev. Tom Bigelow, the new pastor of **Metro-politan Community Church** (800 N. Highland Ave., N.E.). The current District Coordinator, he comes to us from Nashville. Look for MCC to rise rapidly from its current low profile.

Atlanta's first openly gay candidates, including yours truly, have qualified to run this year for the Executive Committee of the Democratic Party. The move was spearheaded by the First Tuesday Democratic Association (named for the date of the Dade County election), which also polled all the candidates and invited them to address the gay community.

Although it may still be running when you read this, **Alliance Theater's** production of *Side by Side by Sondheim* is a disappointment. The voices are adequate at best and Fred Chappell's staging lacks freshness. He should have been able to direct this revue in his sleep, and it looks like he did!

The **Fox Theater** (660 Peachtree), one-time cinema palace that's found new life

CRYPT TONIGHT



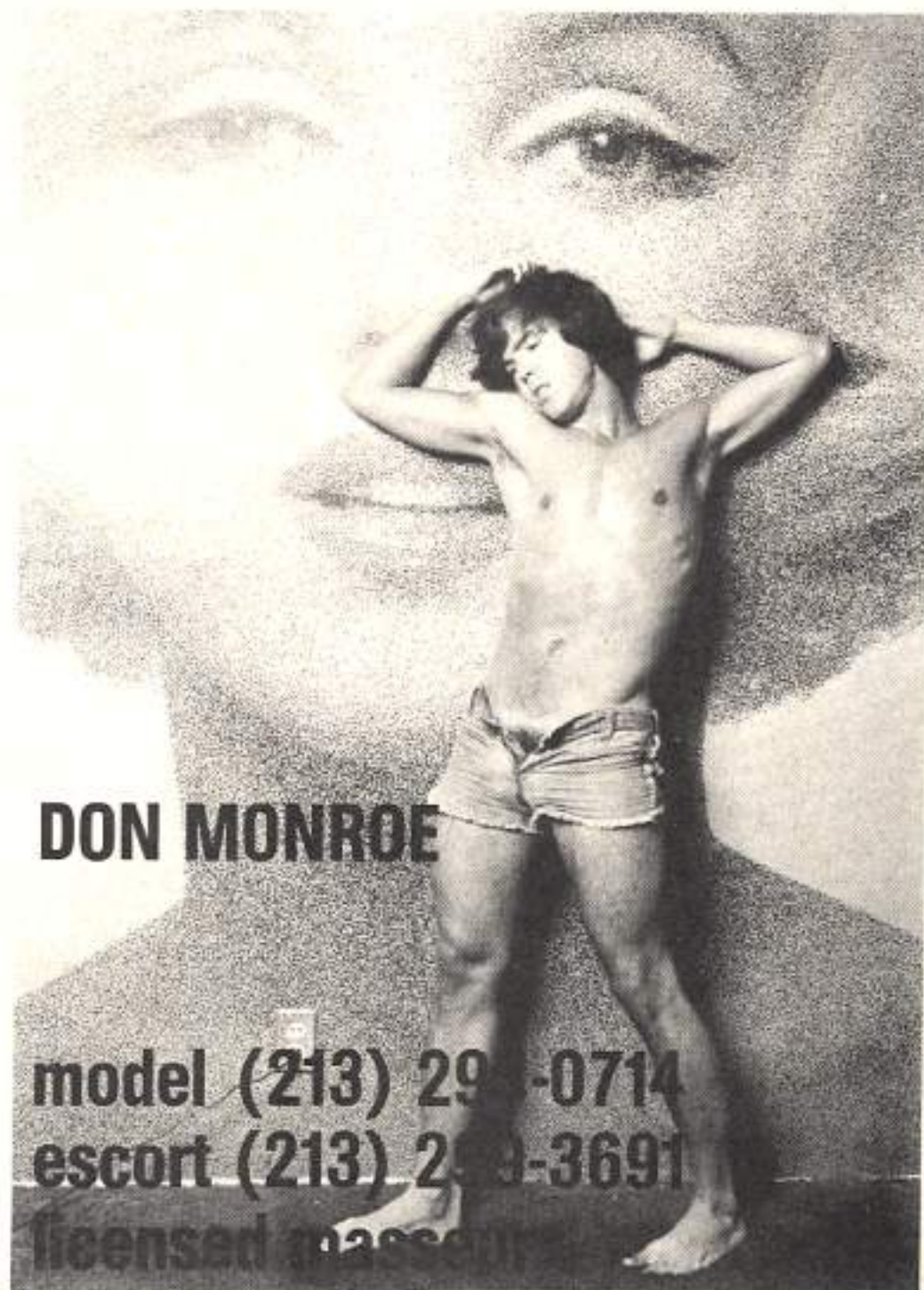
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as a concert hall, is back in the movie business this summer with a Monday night "Family Film Festival." The final offerings on their giant screen will be *The Alamo*, Sept. 11; *The Guns of Navarone*, Sept. 18; and *Around the World in 80 Days*, Sept. 24.

The Atlanta Symphony starts off their 78-79 season Sept. 14 in Symphony Hall of the Atlanta Memorial Arts Center (Peachtree at 15th), Robert Shaw conducting. The third weekend's concerts, Sept. 28-Oct. 1, will include Beethoven's "Ninth" as only Shaw can conduct it. Then the orchestra takes off for a two-week southwestern tour, giving people in eight cities in California, Texas, etc. a chance to hear what I've been bragging about.

The rest of y'all can come here and hear (and see) for yourselves.

—Steve Warren

TORONTO

Butch? Maybe. It all depends on your interpretation and feel for the whole. The musical groundwork is well laid and vocals by John Miki Thor (for recording purposes known as Thor) out of RCA, are heavily muscular. Hence, the first "muscle rock" album by RCA: *Keep The Dogs Away* (KKL1-0250). Thor is a 24-year-old strongman from Vancouver who has packaged his childhood 'fantasy fiction' characters, muscle building and rock music, in a rather bizarre album of muscle rock: rough, tough and on the heavy side of the scale.

(continued on page 84)

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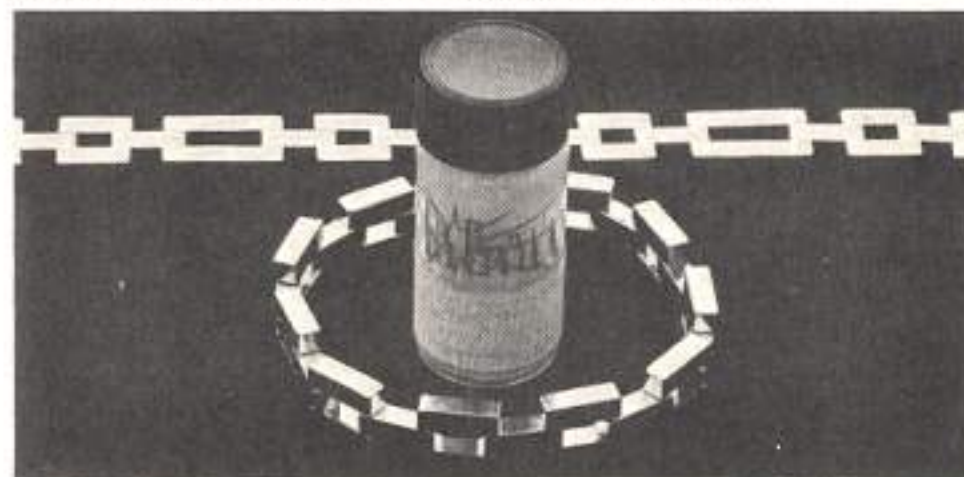
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(continued from 44)

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Boren St. Disco, 2015 Boren Ave. 98121. (623-9649) 8pm-2am daily. B/W,S. 65%mg, 35%fg. Downtown, 5½ acres of parking. "Voted among top 20 U.S. discos by *Billboard*." Shoes & shirt required.

Brass Door Co., 722 E. Pike St. 98122. (322-9605) 4pm-2am Mon.-Fri., 7pm-2am Sat.-Sun. B/W,nF. 98%mg. "Hot men, hot times."

The Monastery, 1900 Boren Ave. 98101. (622-9500) 10pm-3am Thurs., Sun., 11pm-6am Fri.-Sat. No alcohol, S. 70%mg, 5%fg, 25% s. 3 levels, housed in a 1907 Swedish Lutheran church. Private membership w/guest privileges for out-of-towners. No drag.

WEST VIRGINIA

Huntington (304)

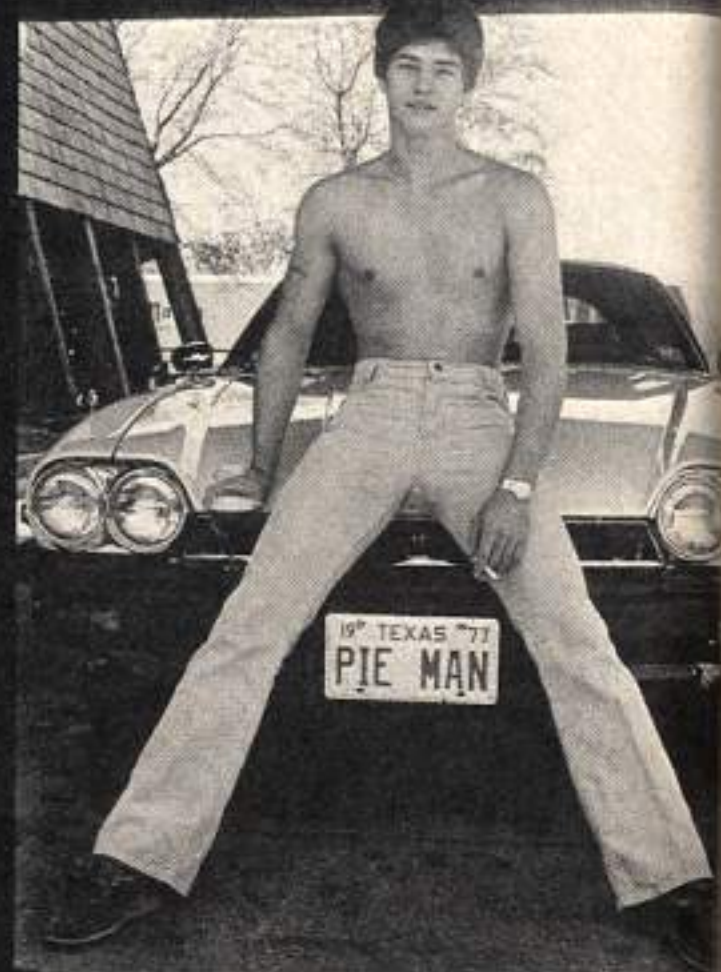
The Driftwood Lounge, 1121 7th Ave. 25701. (696-9411) 4pm-3:30am daily. L.S. 100%mg. Shows 9pm Sun. (\$3 admission), \$1 cover Fri.-Sat. Membership available at door. (18-yr-olds may drink in W.Va.)

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Club manager Wickie Weinstein arrives early at Houston's popular **Soixante-Quinze** disco.



L.A.'s new **Scandals** was still in the "artist's rendering" stage at press time.



Boston's **The Bar** is one of the city's most popular discos and watering spas.

The DJs of the discos listed in the Disco Sampler were polled on their votes for the top disco records, groups and artists for 1978. Here are their choices:

Top 10 Singles

(including the album from which it came, the artist/group, and the record company issuing it)

- "Last Dance," *Thank God It's Friday*, Donna Summer, Casablanca
- "Boogie Oogie Oogie," *Taste of Honey*, Taste of Honey, Capitol
- "Shame," *Smooth Talk*, Evelyn King, RCA
- "Hot Shot," (12" single), Karen Young, West End
- "Macho Man," *Macho Man*, Village People, Casablanca
- "Give Me Love," *Supernature*, Cerrone, Cotillion
- "From East to West," *Voyage, Voyage*, Marlin/TK
- "Dance, Dance, Dance," *Chic, Chic*, Atlantic
- "Chatanooga Choo-Choo," *Tuxedo Junction*, Tuxedo Junction, Butterfly
- "At the Copa," *Even Now*, Barry Manilow, Arista

Top 5 Disco Albums

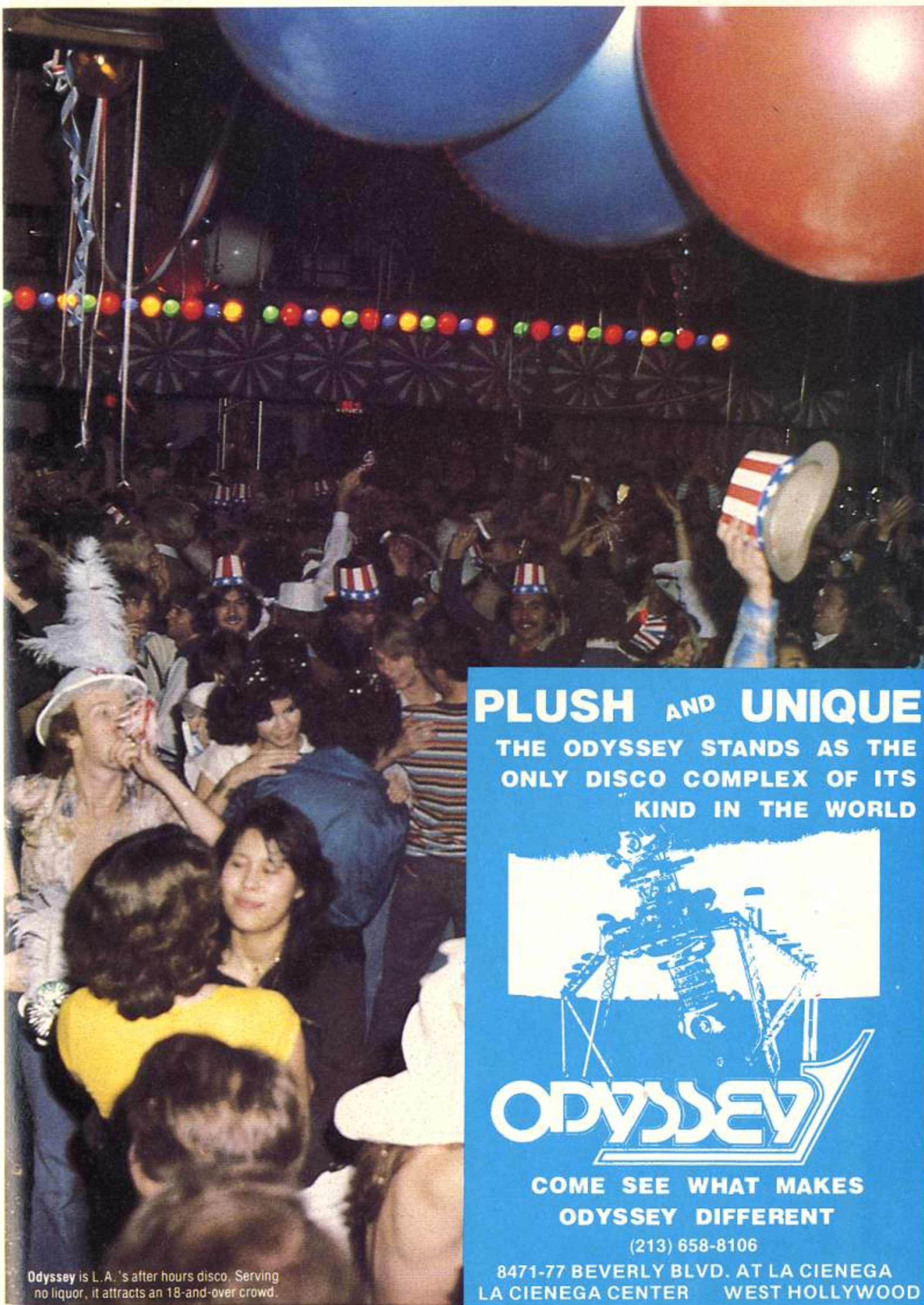
- Thank God It's Friday*, Casablanca
- Voyage, TK*
- Romeo & Juliet*, Casablanca
- If My Friends Could See Me Now*, Custom
- Supernature*, Cotillion

Top 3 Disco Groups

- Village People
- Voyage
- Love & Kisses

Top 3 Disco Artists

- Donna Summer
- Linda Clifford
- Cerrone



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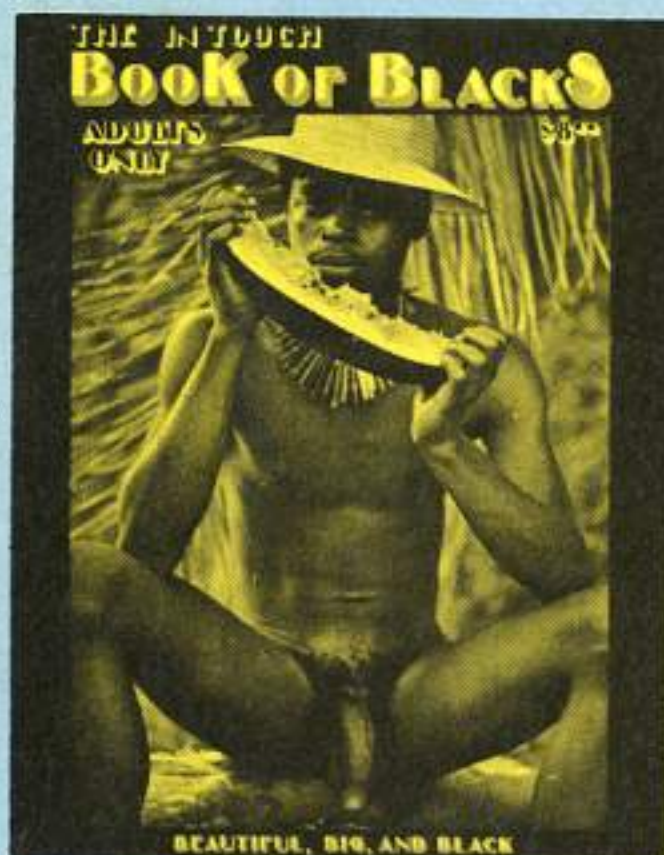
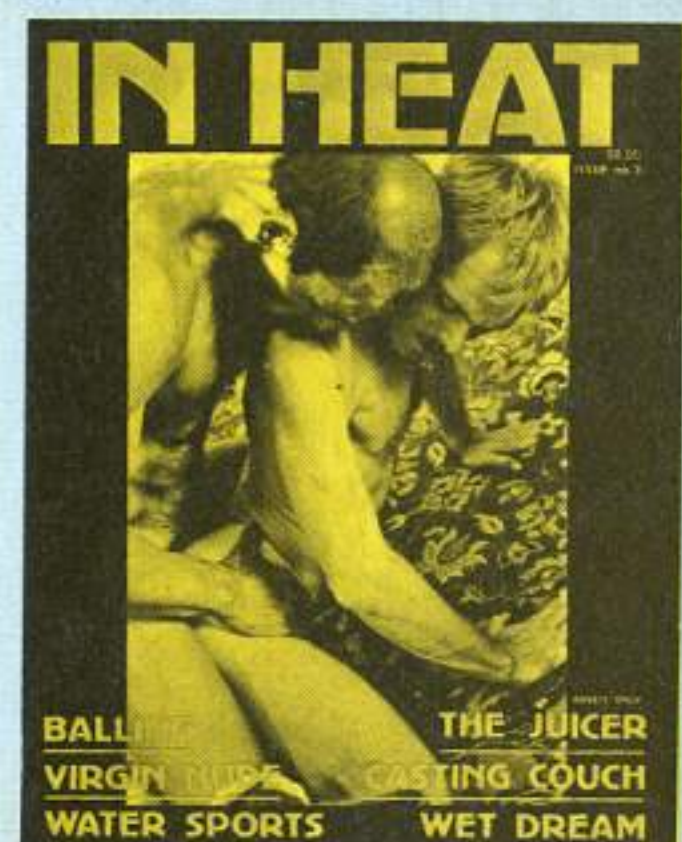


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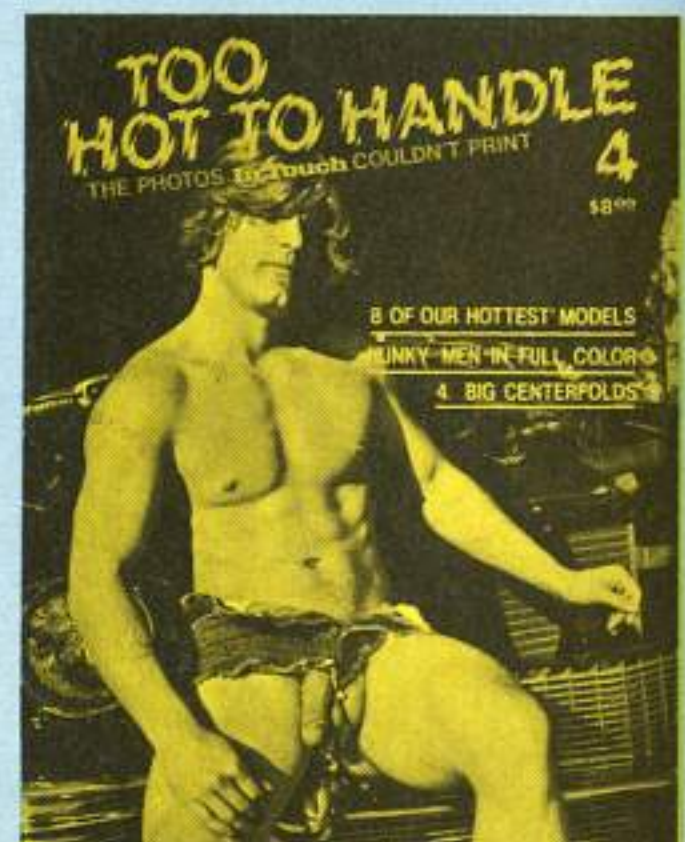
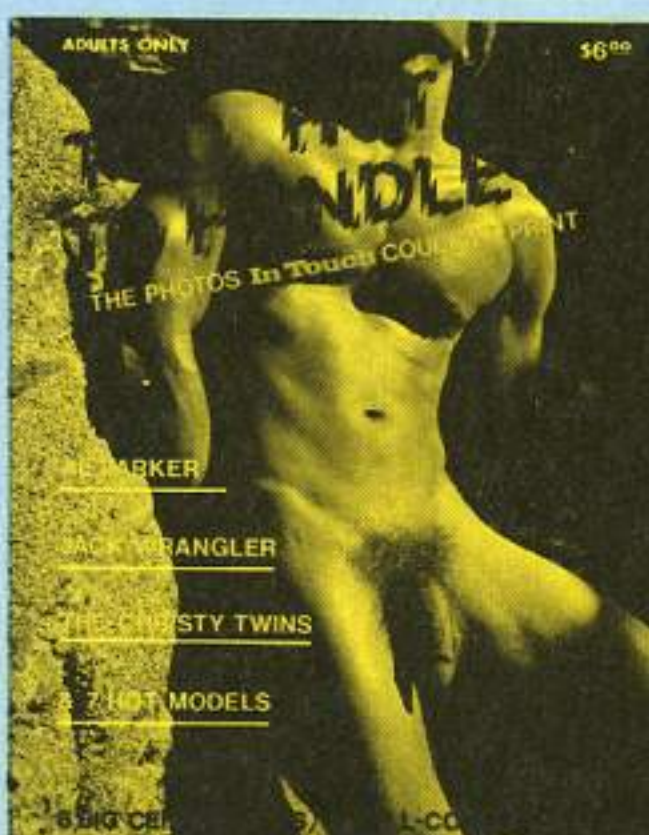
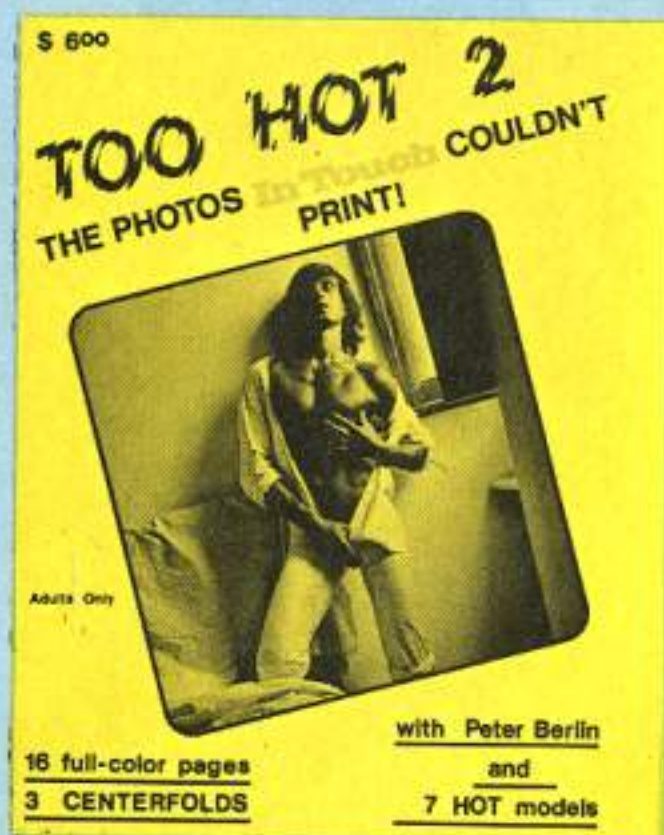
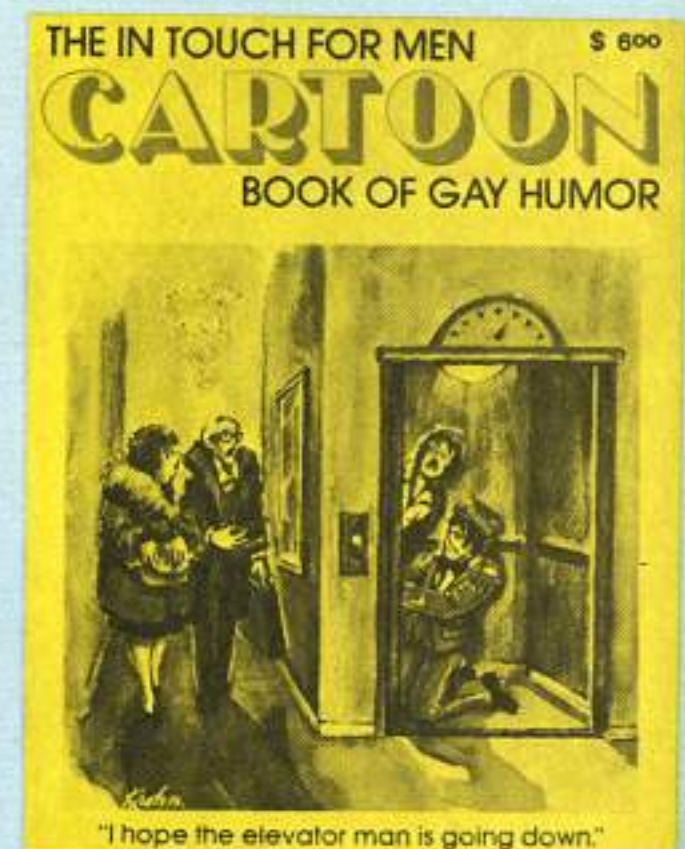
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NIGHTLIFE

(continued from page 79)

Thor's stage show, says *Cashbox*, 'has to be seen to be believed,' laser show and all. You might try it on for size.

The world premiere of Stephen Vizinczey's *In Praise of Older Women* starts Toronto's third annual Festival of Festivals off on an eight-day marathon film fest this month. Filmed in Canada, *Praise* stars Karen Black, Susan Strasberg and humpy Tom Berenger—the knife-wielding stud of *Looking For Mr. Goodbar* fame. But *Praise* is only the opener for a series of some fifty feature productions and 40-odd short subjects slated for showing during the festival. Rostered as well are Swiss director Daniel Schmidt's acclaimed *Violante* in its first North American showing, France's box office smash hit *Diable Menth* and the American docu-drama *Allambrista*, a rave at Cannes this year. Looks like the third Festival of Festivals, after a couple of false starts, has come of age and is a stay-in-town-for event.

There's a new eating and meeting place in town this time around, a three-part setup located in the cellar of an 1855 vintage perfume factory (not a trace remains). Two of the rooms make up *Crispins* (64 Gerrard St. East), a comfortable and relaxed restaurant under the supervision of well-known chef Robert Kiurski. Dinner for two and wine at \$35 and up. The rear room, *Buddy's*, with entry from 370 Church Street, is a lunch and late-night meeting place with stand-up bar and a more limited menu offering. Liquor licenses are pending.



Producer/director/composer/performer Taras Shipowick is one of Toronto's attractions.

Anyone into celebrity watching better hang out at the *Courtyard Cafe* of the Windsor Arms Hotel at lunchtime and after theater or go dancing and elbow-rubbing at *Stages*, late nite weekends. *Stages* is a popular after hours club attracting big names. *Stages'* owners have turned a new page in keeping their night people turned on, and are presently reworking the lighting system. The present one is good enough, but variety is spice to them, and us!

—Bryan Crown

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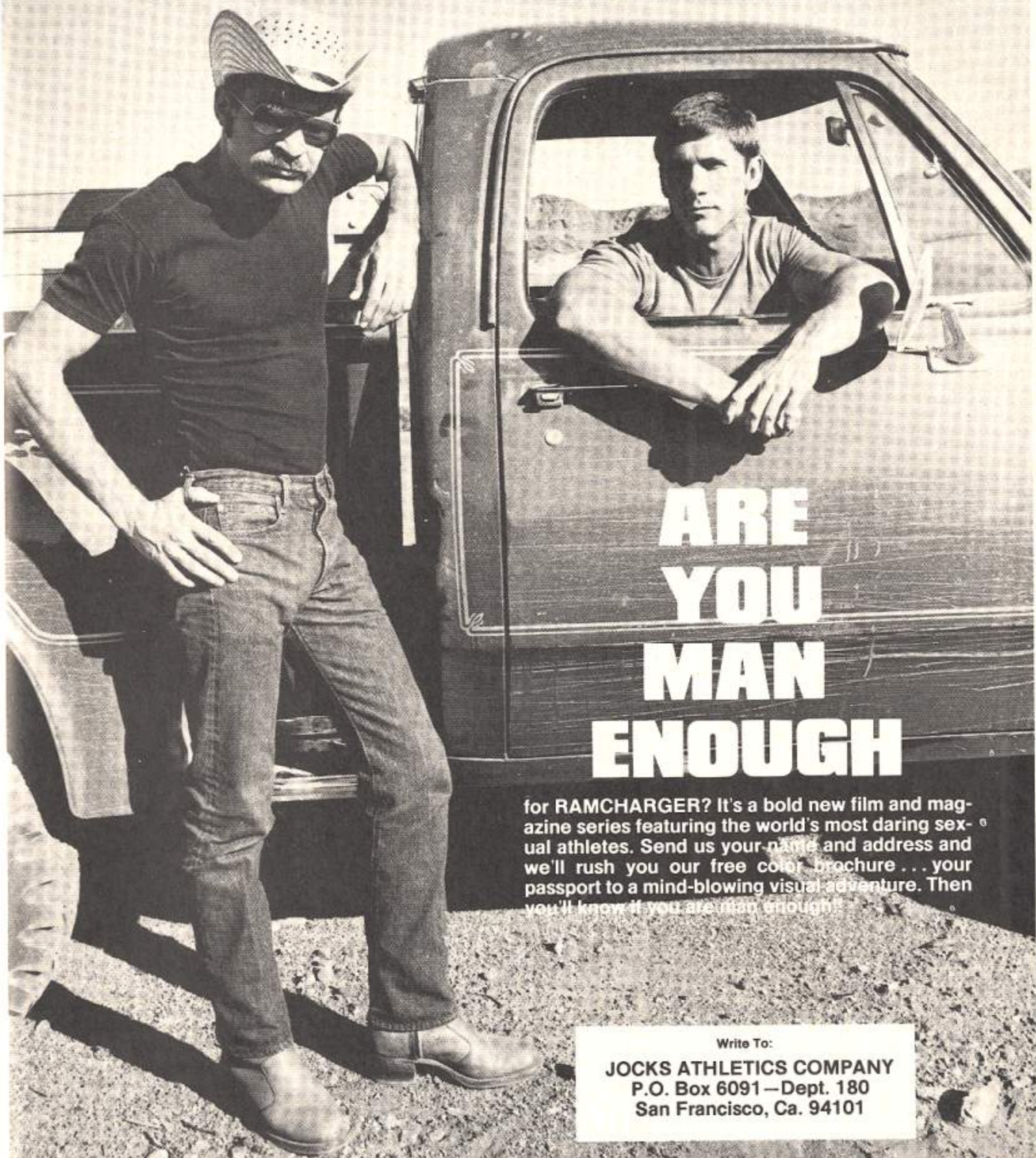
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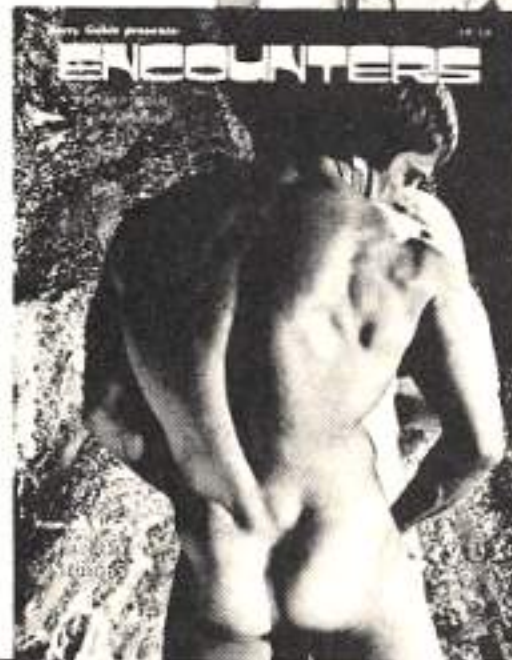
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DISCO NEW YORK

(continued from 27)

room and disappear. And this, of course, all to the music. The room eventually fills with fog until the laser can't be seen. And the people dance on, though they can't see each other. Unfortunately, none of this lends itself to photography, but it is a super effect. The Japanese especially love it.

Before going downtown, my favorite disco, please... **Xenon** over on 43rd St. at the Henry Miller Theater. And here again we have "disco theater" like Studio 54, but not so frantic, so celebrity-conscious—though this can change overnight. Xenon is a select crowd of those who have been through this and now want to dance and have fun without too much of a hassle. They pay a little extra for it.

Here is a mixed environment of costumes and casual spinning attire, straights and gays freely associating on the dance floor. Periodically, a spaceship spins and descends in a huge flurry of snow and streamers fly down to tickle the dancers. A scrim bisects the space with light and shadow effects. None of this, however, is especially new or expensive in comparison to the other disco environments about town. But it's fun. Not even Kovak, who entertained on a pedestal for five minutes in a zebra suit with a phallic organ that squirted toothpaste all over the floor, is especially noteworthy.

No... What is most special about Xenon is the intensity of the dancing. Like Goldilocks' adopted fantasy land, it is neither too packed nor too big, too uncomfortable or too relaxed. It's just right for expressing or finding your own individual movement. And here is the difference. Nowhere in the New York disco scene can you find such fascinating dancing.

A disco rollerdancer encircles the floor, choreographing little kicks and neck tilts into her long legato strides. Nijinsky jetes and spins on demi-pointe. Two humpy bodies tightly jitterbug and lindy—the only touch-dancing worth noting. While Isadora taps, Lou Reed tantalizes a victim with chains on the floor, then stares off frozen into space (very Graham). Let lights and music, costumes and sets steal the disco show elsewhere; the movement at Xenon is vibrant and sensitive. And this dance aspect of disco is usually the most neglected aspect of all—we mostly see bobbing and pointing, hopping and stomping, which is all so quickly boring. At Xenon there was a sensuous Zorro who turned cape swirling into an art form and a disco flamenco. And another whose flowing gold judo pants hardly concealed a swinging brace of hot meat.

Should we call Xenon an acquired taste?

Downtown is another story. And you can go in for the casual Levi's-and-jeans crowd, the sweat and sexroom of **Crisco Disco** or **Cockring**. They are exciting, too. . . . **Paradise Garage**, **Infinity**, **12 West**, **Hurrah's Uncle Charlies South**, and **Zeus** are all similarly angled more for ups and downs than for snow and windowpane. In these waterfront locales, or out-of-the-way locations, the drug scene is quite intense. "You are what you inhale" would seem a motto of this crowd, with a new product Snocaine freezing your lungs into some arctic dilation. Poppers—and I mean amyl, not butyl—are difficult to find but so desirable.

Les Mouches reigns as the most important of these downtown discos, and it is no cheap thrill but an unusual amalgam of disco/restaurant/cabaret. The expansive warehouse setting on 26th Street and West offers fancy nightclub acts which go on simultaneously with the disco in another part of the space. Les Mouches plans to host a September gala with Diana Ross, Donna Summer, Melba Moore, and Eartha Kitt to kick off the new season. And, in passing, it was here that Grace Jones first presented "I Need A Man" dressed as Cleopatra with four breech-clouted studs carrying her on a litter through the screaming dancers.

For those who dine on the elegant side, Les Mouches restaurant features fine cuisine, from escargots to veal en marniere. The atmosphere is deco with tuxedoed Maitre 'd Frank McGourty and two waiters to every table. Crystal and silver.

Meanwhile the dance floor is mirror, mirror, with the least interesting types lost in their reflections and the hottest members in the middle. At Les Mouches, Joel and Chico are the DJs, spinning Wednesday through Saturday. And, like the Ice Palace, there is tea dancing on Sunday afternoon. Pumpkin taxis await you outside when the dawn crows and turns you back into a frog. And then, the cycle starts all over again.

New York can thus be an endless competitive swirl of partygoers looking for the newest, the choicest, the humpiest fantasy environment to let loose in. In the long run, you wonder how it all keeps going. And, of course, someday we won't even care. Right now, however, disco fever has an exotic effect on New York City. And the gay energies that have helped to bring this about are considerable. I could mention many more discos, you know. . . .

Eventually the city that discos will be a commonplace phenomenon. The city that dances, however, will be a rarity—and the place to visit. New York is well on the way to making that distinction. It's a great place to be.

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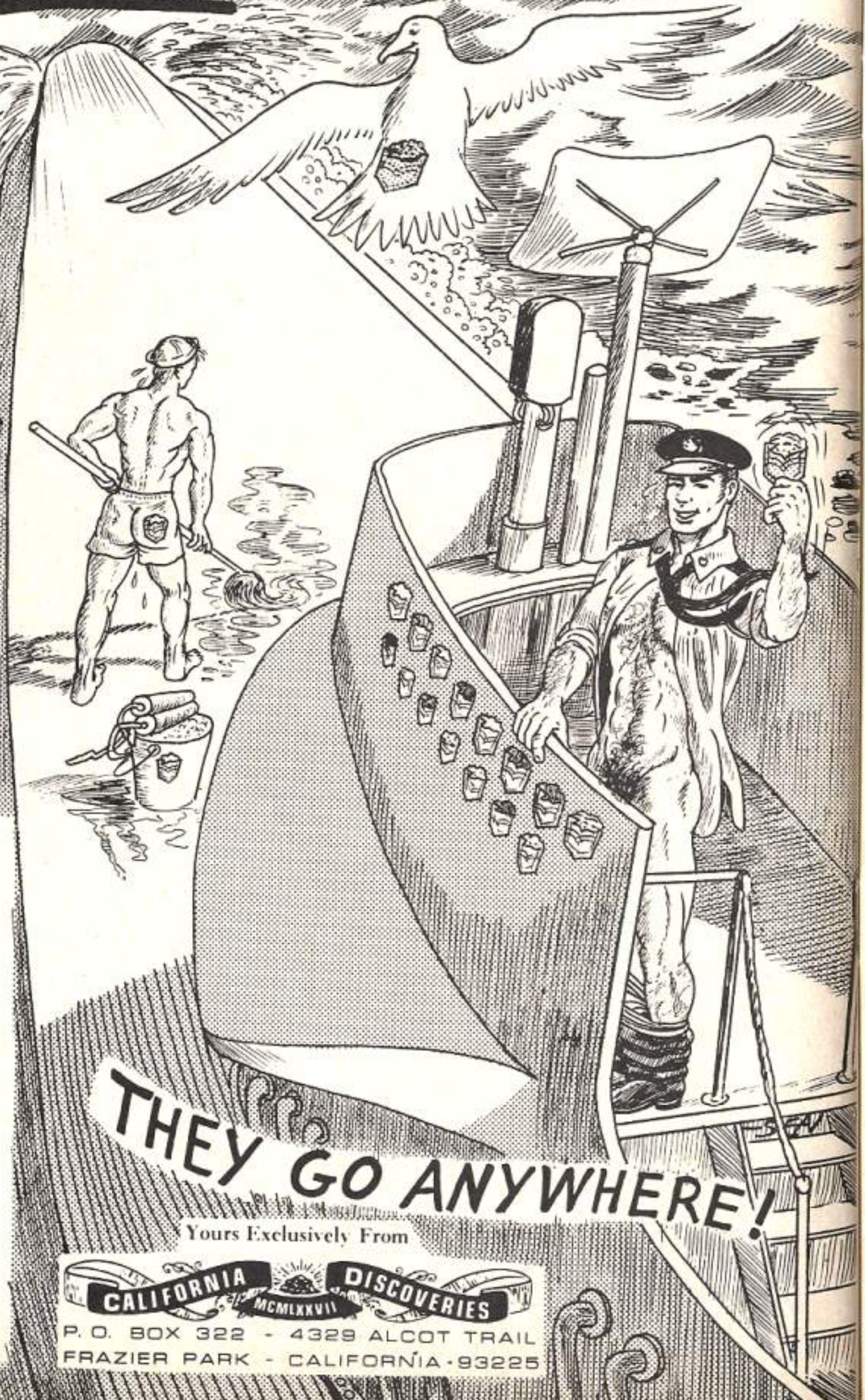
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NORFOLK (continued from 29)

water? Well, downtown Newport News at night isn't the safest place to be, and it would probably be wise to avoid the low-income sections of Norfolk in the evenings, even if you're just driving through. Not too dangerous, but not too hospitable either, is upper Newport News, an upper-middle-class section of town and a hotbed of Jesus freakery. Every third business there appears to be a Christian beanery, car wash, bowling alley, or what-have-you, and vans covered with Jesus slogans ("THE DAMNED SHALL PERISH!") are a fairly common sight. Upper Newport News probably isn't your kind of place, unless you go cruising with a Bible under each arm. Stick to the neighborhoods where people live by bread alone and not by every word of the Fundamentalist God.

Speaking of food, a friend on a local magazine staff tells me, "There are no good restaurants in Tidewater." What he meant was, there are good restaurants, but dining at them will cost you a couple of limbs. As for gay restaurants, they just don't seem to exist. (Occasionally you'll hear a report of a gay restaurant in Norfolk, but in this area an eatery can switch back and forth between gay and straight clientele in a matter of days.)



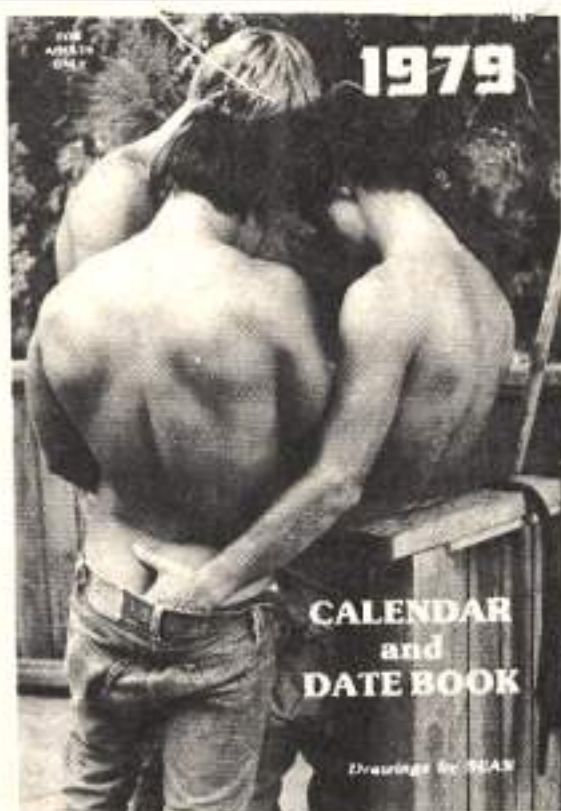
Photo by Norfolk RHA

Norfolk's changing skyline reflects its conservative past—and promising future.

But if you have a few dollars to spare, why not buy a small hotplate and some utensils, and do some of your own cooking? You can make an obscenely rich and satisfying seafood chowder with the oysters and fish from the markets along the Hampton waterfront near City Hall. And don't forget those Virginia hams!

One last thing. If Virginians seem a little reserved the first time you meet them, don't be upset. The people of Virginia are heirs to the snobbish attitudes of the old ante-bellum aristocracy, and don't immediately give back-slapping welcomes to visitors from other parts of the country. It's not that they don't like you—they're just sizing you up. Their reserve breaks down eventually, and then they'll accept you as a friend.

And if breaking into gay society here, on any basis except one-night stands, seems to take a long time, just remember that good things often do. ■■



Drawings by SEAN



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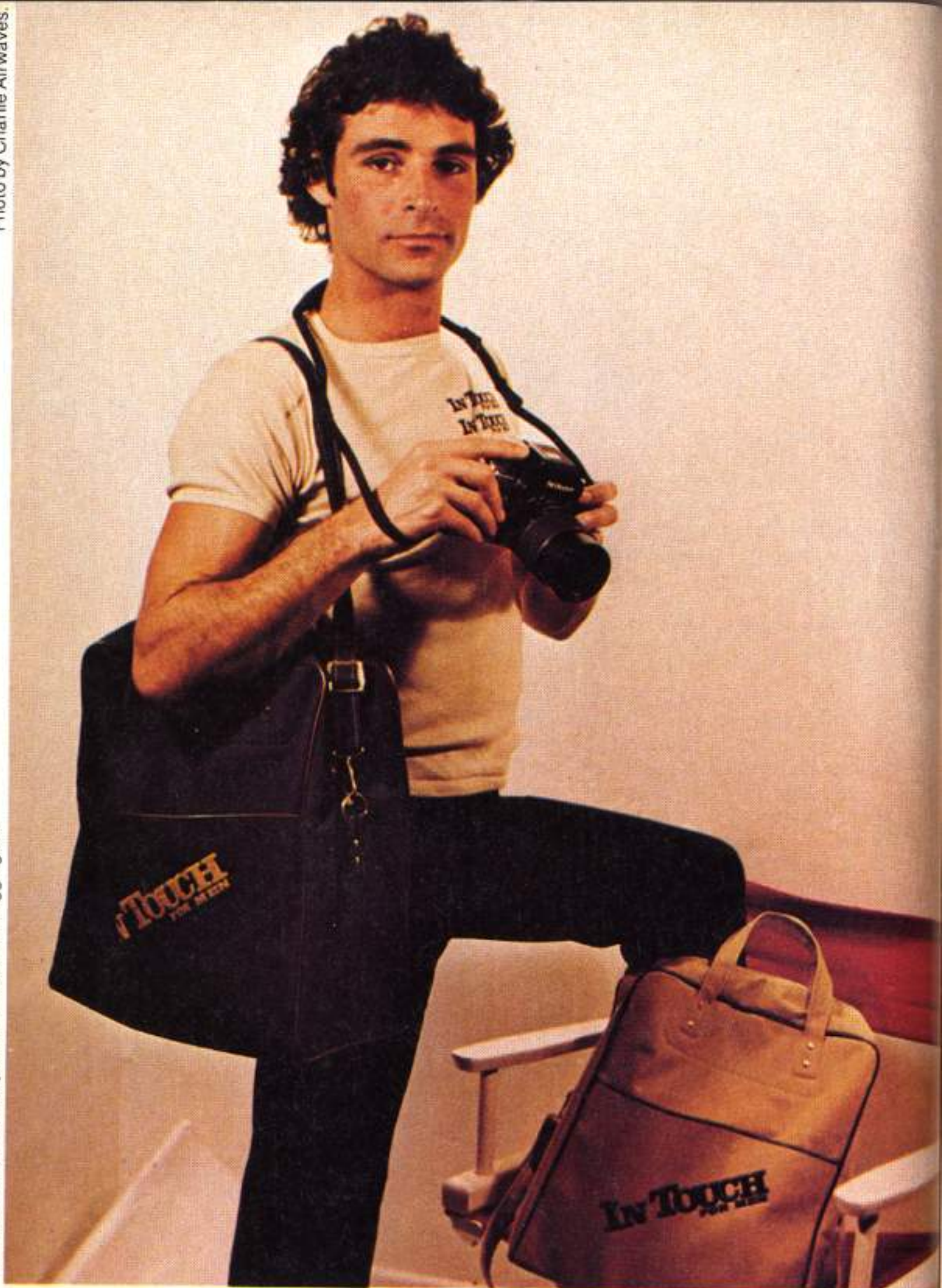
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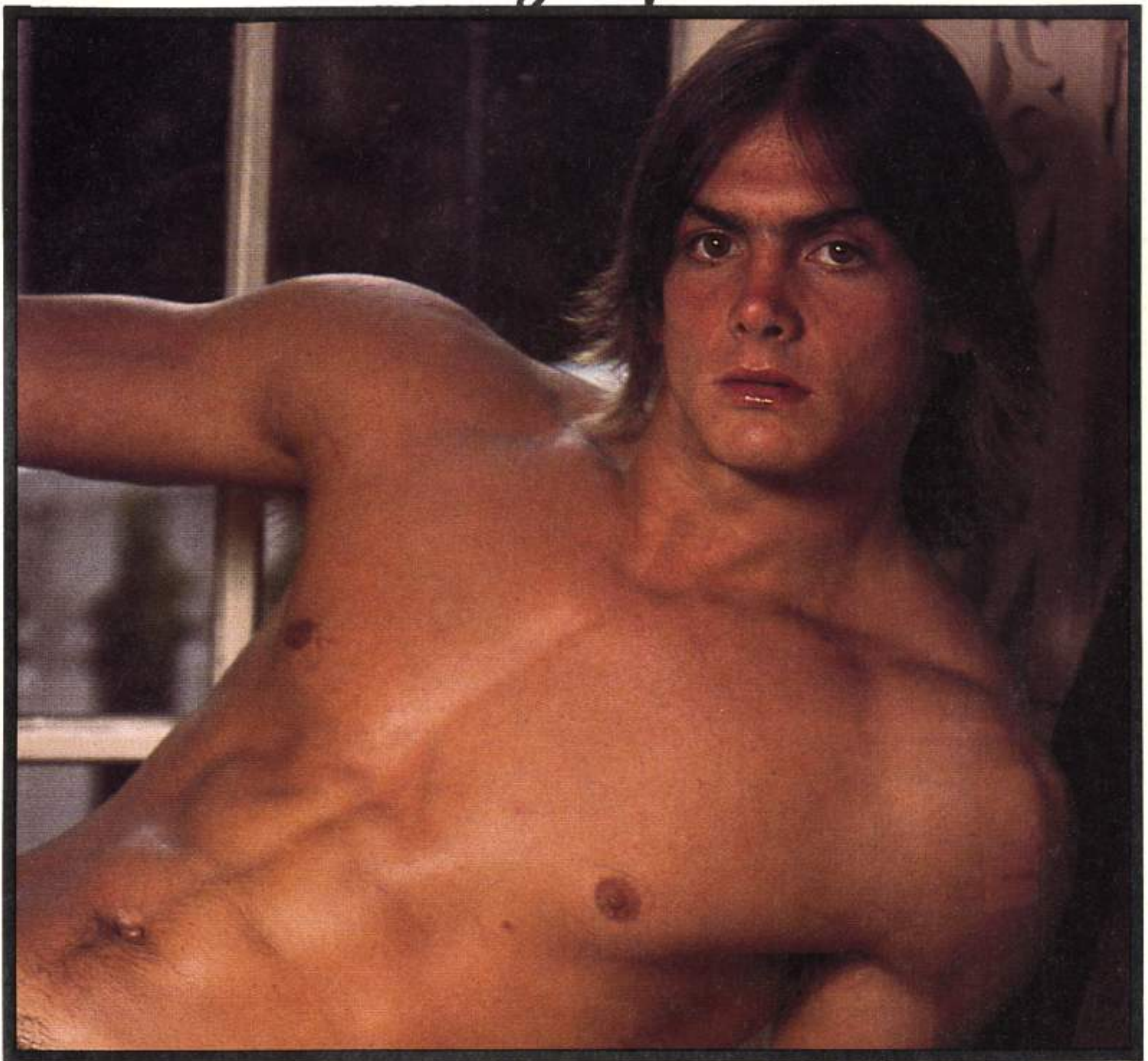
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LEONARDO (continued from 39)

ducats which he (Salai) said he wanted for a pair of rose colored hose with their trimming." Salai remained with Leonardo for over twenty years—a rather long apprenticeship.

The prototype Renaissance Man, Leonardo worked as a botanist, anatomist, engineer, sculptor, painter, inventor, diplomat, soldier, writer, and musician for Lodovico Sforza until 1499 when Sforza met defeat in a bloody battle with the French who then occupied Milan. Leonardo's security, money, and landholdings were lost as well. He found himself in the position of seeking commis-

"Salai remained with Leonardo for over twenty years—a rather long apprenticeship."

sions on his art work. It was at this time that he painted the mural of *The Last Supper* for a fee. The field which he had treated with a cavalier manner—painting—became his hope. In Florence he hoped to re-establish himself as the age's greatest artist.

There was, however, an obstacle named Michaelangelo. These two artists—both gay—were contrasts in every other aspect. Whereas Leonardo dressed in fine velvets, crimson cloaks,

and fine hosiery, Michaelangelo thought nothing of fashion and wore a paint-stained smock. Whereas Leonardo was elegant in demeanor, Michaelangelo was blunt, fiery, and without pretension. Their disagreements were philosophic and artistic. Leonardo found his rival's sketches a bit too sensational, thought sculpting was an art more suited to a dumb muscleman than to a cultured gentleman. Their feud was the equivalent of the Vidal-Buckley or Vidal-Mailer situation. Wherever they met—cafes, in the street, at official functions—the two men bitterly resented each other. The feud's ultimate extension was a renowned "Battle of the Brushes" at a municipal hall. Each artist was commissioned to do a wall-size preparatory painting—facing the other's wall!

What Leonardo had hoped would establish his domination of contemporary art became his debacle. Michaelangelo was a procrastinator and sat back to watch the Old Master tackle his assignment. Leonardo tried to devise a new kind of paint base for his picture; legend has it that he experimented with a wax-and-oil paint mixture that would be heated as applied. What actually happened is unknown, but Leonardo's mural became a scientist's stink-bomb. Paints allegedly smeared and dripped, ruining his work. Today, Florence is using electronic sensing equipment to see if Leo-

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nardo's "cartoon" is still on the wall of the Palazzo Vecchio—behind another mural. But in 1505, the city of Florence had little sympathy for Leonardo's failure. Humiliation drove him from Florence forever.

At this low-point of his career, Leonardo started work on a portrait of an unknown woman. This lady—according to legend—was the young wife of a Florentine businessman who commissioned Leonardo. She is often called “La Gioconda” after him, but there is no way to substantiate this claim. And deductive evidence against this is strong because Leonardo spent over five years on the picture, put fifty layers of paint on it and, most importantly, never surrendered the painting to anyone. It was with him day and night until his death. Only Salai and a young Rafael were honored to see it in the earliest stages of development. The picture was Leonardo’s most private work of art.

As Oscar Wilde's artist in *Picture of Dorian Gray* says: "Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter. The sitter is merely the accident, the occasion. It is not he who is revealed by the painter; it is rather the painter who, on the colored canvas, reveals himself. The reason I will not exhibit this picture is that I am afraid that I have shown in it the secret of my own soul." Indeed, Leonardo refused to



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exhibit his masterpiece—the reasons remain unclear.

In over 400 years, Mona Lisa has been closely examined by myriad experts. Doctors have found her jaundiced eye-balls to be an indication of poor diet—too much pasta! She has been labelled pregnant, or having the soft maternal gaze that being with child could provide. Some think that she is the Madonna. Others feel she is Leonardo's mother, or that she is some widow; some theorize that she is a practitioner of the black arts: a witch. Still others, like Victorian critic Walter Pater, see her as a Mother Death, a vampiric figure who sits before a world without people. More recently, it has been suggested that she resembles Anita Bryant after a bath in orange juice.

Who was the model? What kind of person is this? The Marquis de Sade said Mona Lisa was the "essence of femininity"—yet that does not mean that she is female. There is something in her posture and color that often reminds a viewer of tarnished metal. Mona Lisa is heavy, big-shouldered; for an artist like Leonardo to paint a body so out of proportion to the head is perplexing: he studied geometry and anatomy, applying exactly his findings to his art. Some critics have noted that the hands are large and muscular or edemic, fat and/or swollen: "manly" is a word often used to describe them. Mona Lisa has as many masculine features as feminine. Like most of Leonardo's models, the sitter is an androgynous figure. Mona Lisa's bosom shows hardly any cleavage—odd indeed for a fat woman.

Is Mona Lisa really a boy? The suggestion, once considered outrageous when entertained by the *fin de siècle* Decadents, now takes on a less shocking possibility. It would not have been unusual for Leonardo to have his lover, assistant Salai, pose for the torso, shoulders, and hands. With only Salai's profile to go on, it is more difficult to assess facial characteristics, but the straight nose is similar to Salai's. More importantly, those sensuous lips—appearing in almost every Leonardo picture—are found also on Salai's sketch and on Leonardo's last portrait, that of John the Precursor. Leonardo seemed, in fact, to paint the same face, making the subject either male or female, bestial or celestial, dark or pale, but always young.

The picture may be Leonardo's self-portrait. Certainly there is no evidence that Leonardo was a cross-dresser, but who can say how the man viewed himself? The idea that Leonardo would portray himself as a woman is peculiar to say the least: but at the time of the work, Leonardo had been robbed of his recognition as a great artist by the young and virile Michaelangelo. No matter what Leonardo had tried—in art, in science—by 1505, the time of the *Mona Lisa's* painting, he had failed to complete any task or goal he had set for himself. His

flying machines were unrealized, all his work for Lodovico was for naught, even his protegee—Salai—failed to show evidence of major talent despite intensive tutoring from Leonardo himself. No project started by Leonardo was ever finished and he must have hated how he had "wasted" his talents.

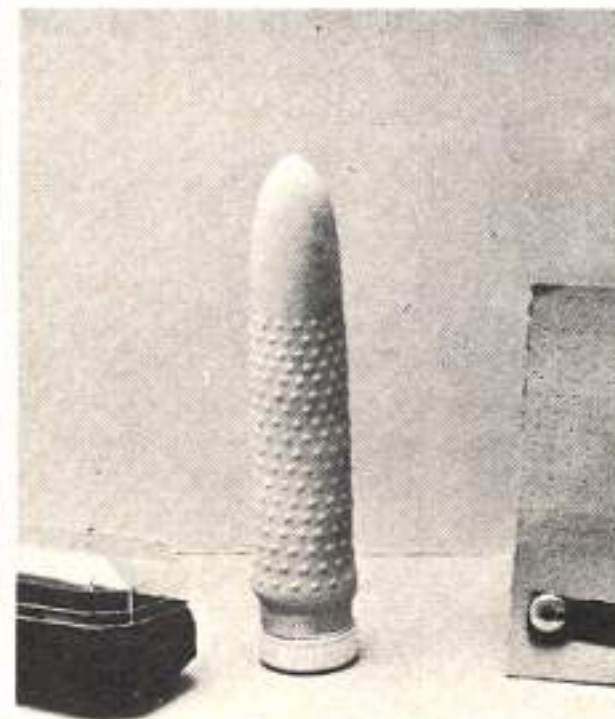
When Oscar Wilde's artist viewed his distorted image of Dorian Gray at that novel's end, "an exclamation of horror broke from the painter's lips as he saw in the dim light the hideous face on the canvas grinning at him. There was something in its expression that filled him with disgust and loathing. . . . It was some foul parody, some infamous, ignoble satire." In many ways *Mona Lisa* is all of this; certainly, enlightened people should look at Leonardo's work with a covert knowledge of the man.

A pattern of images can be traced in Leonardo's work. One central model served as the mold for nearly every major picture—and for many sketches too. Because Salai seems to typify that winsome quality—and since the motif appears after Leonardo became Salai's protector—it seems likely to be the boy's visage that obsessed the artist for most of his adult life. Whether Leonardo sought that expression—or whether Salai's expression captivated Leonardo—is unclear. But the lips and nose of Salai appear on *Leda and the Swan* and on *John the Precursor*, and even in a sketch of one old man (perhaps Leonardo was fantasizing what his lover might appear to be in old age).

One of the most controversial paintings is the last major work by Leonardo. Begun after 1515, *John the Baptist* is generally regarded as idiosyncratic and a parody of Leonardo's style. The complaint made against the picture is that the boy with the coy smile and the long curling hair is too erotic to be the Baptist! He is too substantial; his body is thick and muscular, covered only by a fur truss. The picture has always been regarded as blasphemous by formal Christianity. The boy who is pointing over his shoulder may well be a foreshadowing of a New Light that may be more sexual than mystical. Leonardo's last picture may be his prediction of a new gay awareness, a new acceptance of the lifestyle he needed to eschew publicly in his own life.

In 1512 Leonardo found company in a young boy named Francesco Melzi who was more sensitive than Salai, certainly less of a troublemaker. For seven years Leonardo shared his feelings—and ideas—with this boy. The old man found a companion who comforted and sympathized. Melzi was made heir to Leonardo's papers and insured the survival of his manuscripts which impart to those in future centuries the struggle one man had in balancing his art, his sexual preference, and his society's phobias.

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ROBERT (continued from 46) WAGNER

Created Vanity" episode of NBC-TV's *The Eleventh Hour* series, following this in 1964 with his own pilot, *Area Code 212*, for Four-Star, playing a maverick detective, a venture that was nixed because of a trend away from half-hour adventure shows. He appeared on the big screen in *The Longest Day* (1962) epic, *The War Lover* (1962—with Steve McQueen and a script he didn't care much for), *The Condemned of Altona* (1963), and *The Pink Panther* (1964). He costarred with many of the greats—including several efforts with close friend Paul Newman—and was never anything less than professional.

This is perhaps why, in 1967, he was somewhat prematurely awarded the Golden Scroll Award "in commemoration of his 20th anniversary in the motion picture industry and in recognition of his critically-acclaimed portrayal in *Harper!*" He had actually made 29 major pictures in the past 17 years, but the Pacific Theaters chain in its fatuous exuberance made a three-year miscalculation.

Then came the career goose that established Bob's "bankability," the debut on Jan. 9, 1968, of ABC-TV's *It Takes a Thief*, in which, as the sophisticated and cunning cat burglar, Alexander Mundy, he got to play a U.S. spy whose cover was that of an international playboy. He was flamboyant, sexy, exquisitely dressed (as well as undressed for frequent Riviera-like locations), and, not least of all, a rousing success. It can still be seen, quite frequently, in syndication.

During the course of this series Bob was at least indirectly responsible for bringing Bette Davis out of her involuntary retirement in Maine. As he reconstructed it for the edification of IN TOUCH readers, "what happened was, Bette Davis had said in the papers that 'the most handsome, sexy guy on the screen today is Robert Wagner.' So I picked up the telephone and called her up and I said, 'Jesus, that was really nice of you to say that and I appreciate it a lot,' and she said, 'well, I love you and I love your show, and I think it's terrific,' and I said, 'well, would you come out and do one?' and she said, 'I'd love to.'

"So I wrote a show for her and she came out and did a *Thief* with me, which was terrific for us, and she played a terrific character and then she was sitting up there and not much was happening. And I asked her if I found anything that was really good for her, would she do it? And I found this piece of material called *Madame Sin*, which was written by a director called Barry Shear, and I said, 'Jesus, I think this could be very inter-

esting,' so we built this character, which was a total fabrication, something like Madame Goddam.

"We put it together, and she did it. And I was hoping it would go into a series for her. But it never happened, and I'm sorry. You know, Jerry, I love her. She's the Queen of the Silver Screen! But that's the professional part of it, over on the left hand side. As a lady, as a human being, and as a woman, I love her ... very much. She's very special, very marvelous, very ..." And here his deep emotion made Bob uncharacteristically inarticulate.

During this period, on the home front, both second marriages having broken up, Bob and Natalie began seeing each other again, moved in together on Jan. 26, 1972, and made it legal, for the second time, on July 16 of that year (four days before Natalie's 34th birthday—Bob was 42), exchanging thin platinum slave bracelets to cement the union. The child they had together, Courtney Brooke (named for the character Natalie played with Bob in their 1973 TV drama, *The Affair*) is now an enchanting four-year-old.

Placidly "establishment," tho' besieged by children (his, hers, and theirs), they live in celebrity-laden Beverly Hills, not far below Sunset Boulevard. Their 40-year-old, two-story, Cape Cod-style house, familiar for its blue shutters, was once owned by Patti Page but remodeled with the help of builder Robert Lang. It is light and airy, awash with gardenias and potted orchid trees, a pleasant showplace for the collection of paintings and sculpture by the likes of Courbet, Dali, Matisse, Dousset, and Giacometti it boasts. For some tastes, it may appear excessively "decorated"—American Indian artifacts nudge Persian accents in the "family room," and one bedroom features an American beauty rosebud motif repeated on wallpaper, coverlet, and lampshades. The obligatory pool sparkles out back, and his and hers Mercedes shimmer out front. Somewhere off in the Pacific floats the "Splendour," Bob's 60-foot yacht ("If I wasn't an actor, I'd like to be a sailor!"—now *there's* an image!).

On December 6, 1976, Bob experienced a professional setback which might have crushed an actor of less resilience. That was the day NBC-TV aired Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, made as part of Lord Laurence Olivier's "Tribute to American Theater" by Britain's Granada TV, with Olivier himself as Big Daddy, Maureen Stapleton as Big Mama, and Natalie and Bob as Maggie the Cat and her impotent hus-

band, Brick. Even the kindest critics found the movie couple "woefully miscast," and those of us who validly (if uncomfortably) remember the production can only comment with some charity that the homosexual essence of the character proved elusive to Wagner.

The time of our interview was one of unusually frantic activity for Bob. He had just completed *The Critical List*, a four-hour miniseries with Lloyd Bridges for NBC-TV, and was about to leave for eight weeks of Honolulu location work for *Pearl*, a six-hour miniseries for ABC-TV, co-starring Angie Dickinson under the direction of Alex Singer from a script by co-producer Stirling Silliphant.

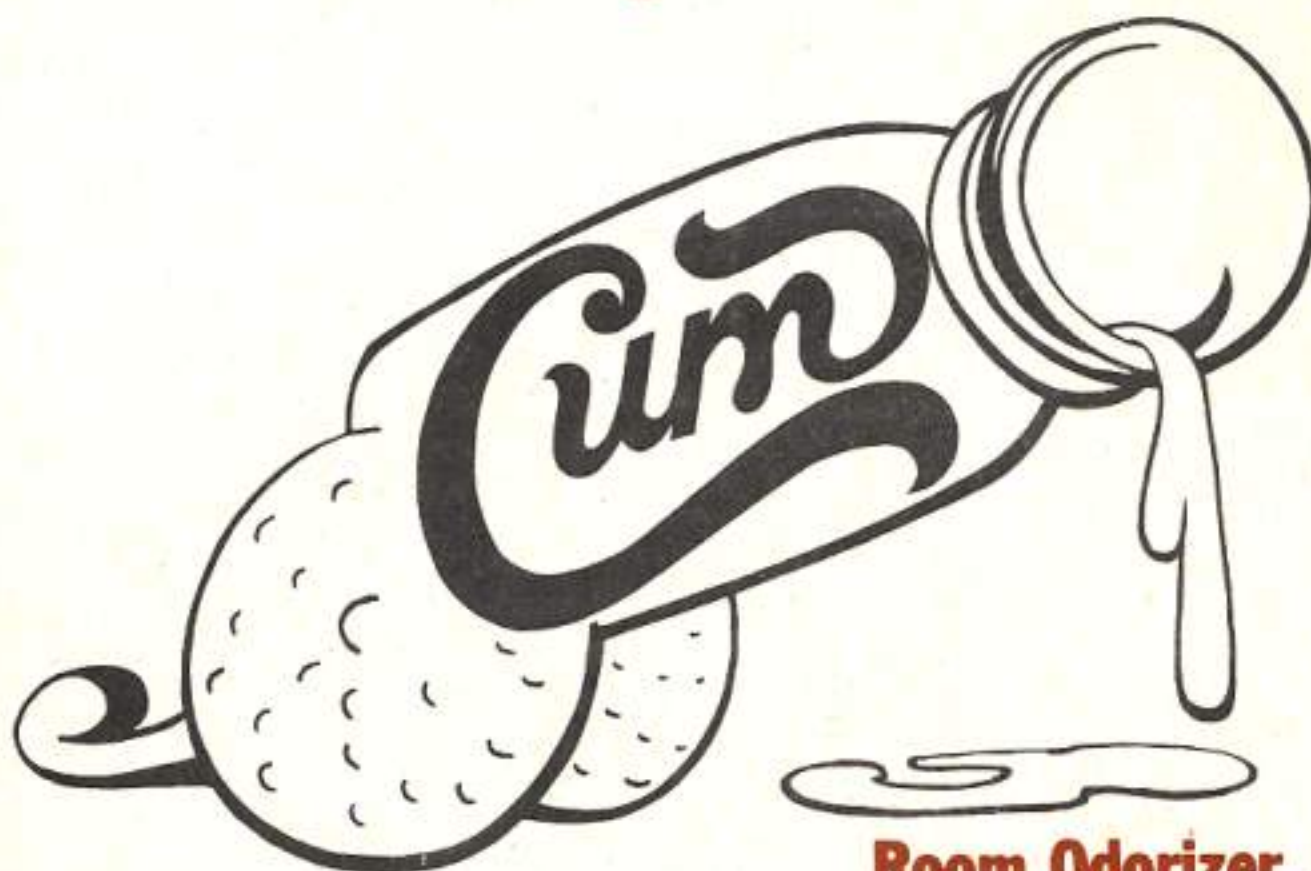
He was truly enthusiastic about this new venture, explaining to me that "Silliphant happened to be 'on' with this one, and he's got some damn good stuff in it, I think—if they don't screw it up! It takes place three days before the day of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and what it is, it shows the innocence of these people *before*, and then the bigotry that comes up, you know, dealing with the Japanese. It's a saga. There's six really good parts in it, so I'm really excited about it.

"The thing that's really kinda strange—which *you'll* understand—is it's the first time I've ever had six hours in my script binder. You know, Jerry, I've always had 120, 130 pages. Never have I done six hours of film, where you really have a chance to let a character reveal itself without throwing all the exposition in that substantiates some kind of behavior that you're going to see shortly. This way you get a chance to let it go a little bit, to find out more about the character, so that slowly it emerges, you know?" But nothing was said of *Switch*, his series with Eddie Albert that will go into its fourth season on CBS-TV this fall, and is viewed in 42 foreign countries.

He looks marvelously alive, modishly bronzed, standing just a shade over six feet. For the record, he sleeps in the nude, in a double bed, prefers shower to bath ("except when I'm in Japan—I like those big tubs!"), is known to be punctual, and a lover of practical jokes. At this moment in time, he is trying to quit smoking. "I've been cutting back," he announces with no little pride, attributing some measure of success to acupuncture. "The only time I have any cigarettes is when I've had too much to drink.

"I'm OK for two or three drinks, but if I have four and I get a little pissed I'll dive into the cigarettes. But I bet I haven't had four cigarettes in four weeks. Have you ever had acupuncture? That's my life! It works! It's also great for your body." Picking up on this last throwaway remark, I ask just how he manages to stay in such obviously good shape. Does he have some sort of exercise routine? With only the hint of a twinkle in those

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blue eyes, he answers quickly, "Jack Daniels."

Bob is obviously drawn to writers. In addition to his offhand remark that Silliphant and he have been "friends for a long time," it is known that one of his best friends is playwright Matt Crowley, and that Rex Reed is a frequent visitor to the Wagner-Wood chalet. This may date back to his childhood, when "I was crazy about Robert Louis Stevenson, stories about the sea, about horses, Zane Grey. . . ." In honest deference to that vocation, his responses to my queries were peppered with "You-know-what-I-means" and "but-I-don't-have-to-tell-you-about-thats." It was all most flattering.

So, knowing our readers' insatiable curiosity, I used this indulgence of his to

ask Bob if he'd ever been asked to do nudity, and, if so, what his reaction was. "Yeah," he admitted, "I've had quite a number of those pictures come in, and I've sort of backed off from it. I kept thinking, you know, if it's handled the right way it's all right. I guess for some guys it's OK, but I've still got children and all that.

"If it's used in the right way I would have no doubts. I remember there was a time there when they said that the next big star was going to be a star who did frontal nudity. But I'd hate to be hyped up like that, really, wouldn't you, Jerry?" Evasively dismissing this as a rhetorical question, I decided it was time to conclude our chat.

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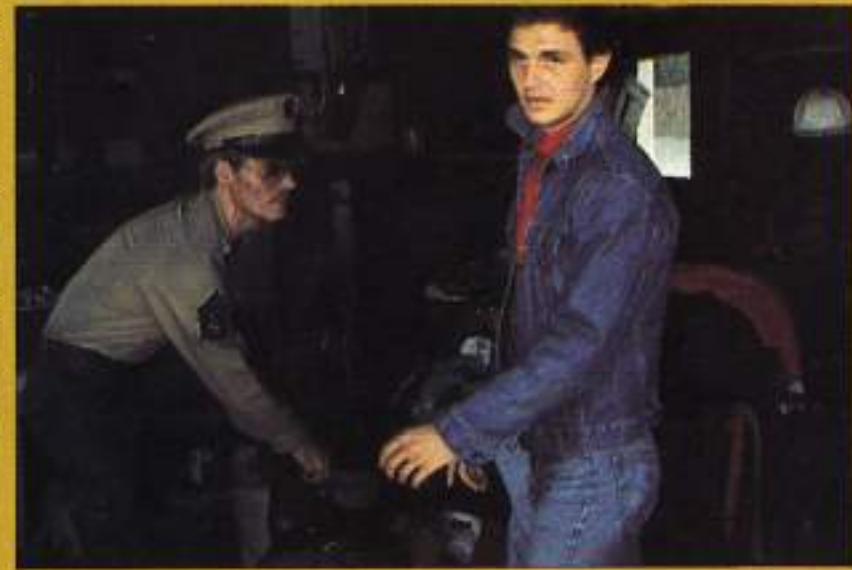
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